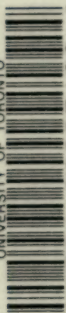


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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SAINT BERNARD

ON CONSIDERATION

TRANSLATED BY

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

ONLY some six years had passed since the death of Gregory VII when St. Bernard was born (A.D. 1091), just two years before Anselm was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. The echoes of the thunders of the great reforming Pope had scarce died away, and the memory of the uncompromising struggle between him and the Emperor Henry IV was still fresh in the minds of men. Under his direction the Church of Rome had taken enormous strides towards that absolutism and universal supremacy, both in things temporal and spiritual, which was to reach its climax under Innocent III (A.D. 1198-1216), when papal power was perhaps greater than ever before or ever since. It was the age of the Crusades, and of the rise of the Military Religious Orders. The intellect of Europe was beginning to awaken. The popular story of the discovery of the original manuscript of Justinian's famous Pandects, or digest of Roman law, in the ruins of Amalfi is discredited,¹ but the study of civil law was vigorously pursued, and the profession was one of great honour. Canon law received no less attention. The vast materials, after twenty-four years' labour, were formed into a 'body' by Gratian, and published at Rome about 1140. 'The study of this code became of course obligatory upon ecclesiastical judges. It produced a new class of legal practitioners, or canonists; of whom a great number added, like their brethren the civilians, their illustrations and commentaries,

¹ See Hallam, *Literary History*, vol. 1. p. 62.

for which the obscurity and discordance of many passages, more especially in Gratian's collection of canons, papal epistles, and sentences of fathers, gave ample scope. From the general analogy of the canon law to that of Justinian, the two systems became in a remarkable manner collateral and mutually intertwined, the tribunals governed by either of them borrowing their rules of decision from the other in cases where their peculiar jurisprudence is silent or of dubious interpretation.'¹ Pope Eugenius III was 'extremely satisfied' with Gratian's work,² and is said to have instituted the earliest academical degrees for distinction in that branch of learning. St. Bernard's feelings are clearly expressed in the *De Consideratione*.

It was a time, too, of political movement. Arnold of Brescia, a disciple of Abelard, but more famous for his political heresy, not only preached reform in the Church, but threw Rome into convulsions by proclaiming (A.D. 1143) a Republic. 'He presumed to quote the declaration of Christ, that His kingdom is not of this world; he boldly maintained that the sword and the sceptre were intrusted to the civil magistrate; that temporal honours and possessions were lawfully vested in secular persons; that the abbots, the bishops, and the Pope himself must renounce either their state or their salvation; and that after the loss of their revenues, the voluntary tithes and oblations of the faithful would suffice, not indeed for luxury and avarice, but for a frugal life in the exercise of spiritual labours.'³ The terror of successive popes, he was hanged, burnt, and his ashes cast into the Tiber (A.D. 1155) only two years after Bernard's death. The saint's advice to the Pope more than once recalls the teaching, tone, and temper of Arnold.

¹ Hallam, *Middle Ages*, p. 369.

² Mosheim, *Cent.* xii.

³ Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. lxix.

The Waldenses and the allied Albigenses, claiming the right to preach without commission, when, and where they pleased, and infected with Manichean errors, were already sowing the seeds of the Reformation, and the popes, by the traffic in indulgences, were contributing to the resources of the revolt.

But it is Abelard in whom centres so much of the intellectual interest of the period, and for whom it is claimed that 'he planted the standard of impartial philosophy'.¹ He was 'almost the first who awakened mankind in the ages of darkness to a sympathy with intellectual excellence. His bold theories, not the less attractive perhaps for treading upon the bounds of heresy, his imprudent vanity, that scorned the regularly acquired reputation of older men, allured a multitude of disciples who would never have listened to an ordinary teacher. It is said that twenty cardinals and fifty bishops had been among his hearers.'² The schools of Paris through his stimulus acquired something of the character of a University, and though his life may have been 'the shipwreck of genius, there are few lives of literary men more interesting, or more diversified by success and adversity, by glory and humiliation, by the admiration of mankind and the persecution of enemies'. Such a man could hardly escape the fiery wrath of St. Bernard, who described him as 'with Arius disposing of the Trinity by degrees and measures, with Pelagius preferring free will to grace, and with Nestorius dividing Christ'.³ One of the most illustrious of

¹ Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, i. p. 48. ² Hallam, *Middle Ages*.

³ For Abelard Lewes, *Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. ii. p. 13, sq., and Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. ii. p. 386-97 (translated by Professor Morris, Hodder and Stoughton, 1872), may be consulted. Mr. Reginald Poole, in his *Illustrations of the Hist. of Mediæval Thought in the Departments of Theology and Politics*, strongly sides with Abelard against St. Bernard. On the other hand Cardinal Newman in his 'Rise and

Abelard's disciples was Peter Lombard (died 1164), whose *Book of Sentences*, a collection of propositions from the fathers, with no attempt at reconciling them, placed him at the head of the scholastic divines. Scholastic theology and scholastic philosophy were rapidly developing; men were busy discussing the provinces of faith and reason, or venturing to attempt the solution, with the aid of Aristotle, of the insoluble in the realms of metaphysics and Christian dogma.

Amid all this manifold stir and activity St. Bernard was the most commanding personality. He could 'create popes, and command kings, and lead councils by the nose. His advice was asked by the greatest persons in Church and State; and he was even adored by the common people, who fancied that he was an inspired man, and endowed with the gifts of healing.'¹ So says a writer by no means disposed to exaggerate his influence, or gild the merit of his private character. 'We must accept him as quite the eminent and governing man in the Europe of his time—whose word carried with it a sovereign stress surpassing that of any other, whose hand most effectively moulded history.'²

And there appears to be a general consensus that the treatise on 'Consideration', brief though it be, is the greatest of St. Bernard's literary efforts. Calvin declared that in it the author spoke so sublimely as if he were the very truth speaking. Neander regarded it as a mirror of humiliation to all subsequent popes. Mr. Cotter Morison describes it as his 'great work'; his American admirer, Dr. Storrs, more in detail, as follows:—'The book has remained from that day to this the mirror of St. Bernard's thoughts concerning a true pastor of Progress of Universities' (*Historical Sketches*, vol. iii.) has a pungent criticism of the 'gifted Abelard'.

¹ Jortin, Part II. p. 294.

² Storrs, p. 574.

Christendom. There is no single work of Bernard in which his spirit is more clearly or more tranquilly revealed ; none which is a better memorial of him. And it was written in what he himself styled *the season of his misfortunes*—when the nations which had been recently thrilled with his eloquence, astounded by his amazing works, and pushed by his energy to magnificent enterprise, were stirred by griefs too deep for tears, and hot with a rage that made the air like a fiery furnace. I know of no one who could better have taken to himself the ancient words of Ps. xxvii. 5 and lvii. 1 : *In the day of trouble he shall keep me secretly in his pavilion, in the covert of his tabernacle shall he hide me. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me ; for my soul taketh refuge in thee ; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I take refuge, until these calamities be overpast.*¹

As I learn on inquiry at the Bodleian Library and at the British Museum, no translation in English of St. Bernard's little masterpiece has hitherto been published. For the suggestion that one might with advantage be offered to the public I am indebted to my esteemed diocesan, Dr. Gibson, Lord Bishop of Gloucester. Dr. Sanday's unfailing kindness on this and other occasions I beg most gratefully to acknowledge. I must also express my gratitude to the Rev. P. H. Kempthorne (late Fellow of St. John's, Cambridge), Rector of Wyck Risington, for favouring me with his opinion on some obscure passages. The text adopted is that of I. G. Krabinger, Custodian of the Royal Library, Munich, 1844. Readers interested in the career of St. Bernard may be referred to Cotter Morison's *Life and Times* (Macmillan, 1901), the Rev. I. W. Sparrow's *Lectures*

¹ *Lectures on St. Bernard at the Lowell Institute, Boston, and at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, pp. 560-1.*

(1895), and to the excellent little volume of the late Dr. Eales (S.P.C.K.). Dr. Storrs' book, quoted above, is on a much larger scale. A valued correspondent tells me that the Abbey of Clairvaux, once the home of 700 'Religious,' is now a penal establishment, where more than 1,000 convicts manufacture sheets, tissues, &c. How are the mighty fallen!

GEORGE LEWIS.

ICOMB RECTORY,

February 8, 1908.

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CHRONOLOGY

A. D.

- 1091. Birth of St. Bernard.
- 1113. Bernard enters Citeaux.
- 1115. Foundation of Clairvaux.
- 1130. Election of Pope Innocent II.
- 1140. Council of Sens. First encounter with Abelard.
- 1145. Pope Eugenius III.
- 1147. Second Crusade.
- 1148. Council of Rheims. Errors of Gilbert of Poitiers
condemned.
- 1149. Failure of the Crusade.
First Book of the *De Consideratione*.
- 1150. Second Book.
- 1152. Third Book.
'The two last some small time after' (Du Pin).
- 1153. Death of St. Bernard.

PROLOGUE

I AM thinking, Most Holy Father, Eugenius, of writing something which may edify, delight, or console you. But when I would fain begin I experience a strange hesitation, and my words falter, for your Majesty and the love I have for you, like rival commanders, issue conflicting orders. The one bids me advance, the other holds me in check. Your condescension reconciles their differences, inasmuch as though you might more fitly enjoin a task, you beg of me a favour. If then your Majesty unbends, my modesty should surely also yield. True, you sit on Peter's seat. What of that? Though you walk on the wings of the wind, you will never outstrip my affection. Love knows no lord; it recognizes a son even in the robes of office. Love, by its very nature, is lowly enough; it needs no prompting to kindness, seeks no reward for obedience, sets no bounds to its respect. It is not so with some, not so: but they are moved with fear or avarice. These are they who seem to bless, but there is evil in their hearts; they flatter to one's face, but in the time of need they desert us. But charity never faileth.¹ To confess the truth, though I no longer act as a mother to you, I have not lost a mother's affection for you.² In days gone by you were rooted in my very heart; you are not so easily to be plucked out. Ascend into heaven, or descend into the abyss, you shall not leave me: I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. I loved you when you were poor, I will love you now

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

² Eugenius, it will be remembered, had been under St. Bernard at Clairvaux.

that you are the father of both rich and poor. For if I know you well, you have not in becoming the father of the poor lost your poverty of spirit. I am sure that the change in your circumstances has come to you : it has not been sought by you ; and I am no less certain that your promotion has left you what you were before, though something be added thereto. I will, accordingly, admonish you, not as a schoolmaster, but as a mother, at all events as one who loves you. Perhaps the fonder I am, the more foolish I may seem. If so, it will be in the eyes of him who loves not, and does not feel the power of love.

BOOK I

[ST. BERNARD shows how unhappy a Pope must be if he neglects himself and spends all his time in hearing and deciding other men's differences. He complains of the great number of causes brought into the ecclesiastical courts, and of the many abuses prevailing there. The conduct of such cases, he maintains, is more consistent with the secular than the ecclesiastical power. He would not have Eugenius follow the example of some of his predecessors, who were so immersed in business that they found no time for contemplation. He would rather that the Pope imitated Gregory the Great (b. about A. D. 550, d. A. D. 604), who, when Rome was besieged, went on quietly working at his Homilies on the Prophet Ezekiel. Things divine claim the first consideration. The nature and connexion of the four primary virtues are discussed, and the book concludes with a severe censure of the unbecoming bickerings at the ecclesiastical bar, and an earnest exhortation to Eugenius to endeavour to bring about a reformation.]

CHAPTER I

St. Bernard sympathizes with the Pope in his many cares

1. Well, then, where shall I begin? I prefer to begin with your occupations, because it is in these that I most chiefly share your sorrow. Share, I say, for I take it for granted that you have sorrow; otherwise I ought rather to have said 'I sorrow', since where there is no sorrow one cannot share it. Accordingly, if you grieve, I grieve with you;

if you do not, still I grieve, and deeply, because I know that the member which is past feeling is all the farther from health, and that the sick man who is unconscious of his sickness is in the more dangerous condition. But God forbid that I should have any such suspicion about you. I know how keenly, not long ago, you used to enjoy the luxury of a quiet life. You cannot so soon have changed your habits; you cannot all at once extinguish your regret for the pleasures so recently taken from you. The fresh wound must be painful. The wound has not already hardened, or in so short a time become past feeling. However this may be, unless you dissemble, your daily losses are sufficient reason for continual grief. If I am not mistaken, you are reluctantly torn from the embraces of your Rachel,¹ and as often as that befalls you your sorrow must be renewed. But when does that not happen? How often do you wish, and in vain? How often do you move, but not move forward? How often do you attempt, and without result? strive, and do not obtain? How often are you in labour, and do not bring forth? venture out to sea, but drift away? where you begin, there make an end? Just as you are beginning to grow, do they not cut you down?² 'The children have come to the birth,' saith the prophet, 'and there is not strength to bring forth.'³ Do you know this? No one better. You are a man of shameless face, and like the heifer, Ephraim, have learnt to love treading out the corn,⁴ if, with your consent, things go thus with you.

¹ In the mystical writers Rachel and Leah respectively denote the contemplative and the active life.

² Or 'beginning to weave, cut your thread'.

³ 2 Kings xix. 3.

⁴ Hos. x. 11. 'The treading out the corn was an easy and luxurious service, since God had forbidden to muzzle the ox, while doing it. It pictures then the sweet gentle ways by which God wins us to His service.

God forbid ! This is the portion of him who is given over to a reprobate sense. I certainly long for you to have peace away from these, not in their company. There is nothing I dread more for you than that peace. Do you wonder if such peace could ever be yours ? Yes, I tell you, if, as mostly happens, habit passes into heedlessness.

CHAPTER II

The strength of evil custom

2. Do not trust your present feelings too much. There is nothing so rooted in the heart but it may by neglect in process of time lose its force and vigour. If you neglect the old wound it grows callous, and in proportion as it loses feeling it becomes incurable. In fact, severe unceasing pain cannot last long ; if it is not got rid of some other way, it must of necessity be conquered by itself. Beyond a doubt it will either be relieved by some remedy, or it will end in stupefaction. Custom turns everything upside down. Give it time, and what can resist its hardening effect ? What does not yield to use ? How many find that the bitterness they had formerly dreaded has unfortunately through use alone turned to sweetness ? Hear how the just man laments over this : ‘ What things my soul refused to touch are now through want become my food.’¹ At first something will seem to you

Israel would serve thus far ; for she liked the service ; she was accustomed to it, and loved it.’ Pusey, *Minor Prophets*.

¹ Job. vi. 7. ‘ The proper idea not having been seized, the passage has been given very differently by prior expositors ; almost all of whom are, at the same time, at variance with each other. In our established text it

unbearable ; as time goes on, and you get used to it, you will judge it of no such great importance ; a little later you will think it even unimportant ; a little later you will not think it even that ; a little later it will delight you. Thus little by little our hearts are hardened, and then we loathe goodness. Just so, severe unceasing pain must, as I have said, have a speedy ending ; it will either be cured, or insensibility will ensue.

3. This is precisely why I have always feared, and still fear, that if you delay to apply the remedy, you will not endure the pain, and that you may thus incur the risk of being irrevocably and hopelessly overwhelmed. I am afraid, I say, lest, surrounded by occupations so numerous that you distrust your power of getting through them, you may harden your forehead, and thus gradually in a measure strip yourself of the feeling of a just and profitable sorrow. It would be far more prudent for you to even leave them for a time, than suffer yourself to be carried away by them, and certainly by degrees led whither you would not. Do you ask whither ? I reply, to a hard heart. Do not further ask what that means ; if you have not greatly feared it, it is yours already. That heart alone is hard which does not shudder at itself for not feeling its hardness. Why ask me ? Ask Pharaoh. No one ever got his hard heart cured unless God haply took pity on him, and, according to the prophet, removed his heart of stone and gave him

occurs thus : "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt ? or is there any taste in the white of an egg ? The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat " ; a mixt rendering from the different Latin copies ; and at the same time offering no meaning whatever.' Good's *Translation of the Book of Job*, Notes, p. 70. Good renders— 'A thing loathful to the taste of my soul, this alas ! is my sorrowful meat.' The R. V., Margin, has, 'What things my soul refused to touch these are as my loathsome meat.'

a heart of flesh.¹ What then is a hard heart? It is a heart which is not torn by remorse, nor softened by affection, nor moved by entreaties; which does not yield to threats, but is hardened by scourges. It is ungrateful for kindnesses, faithless in counsel, cruel in judgement, shameless in disgrace, without sense of fear in the midst of danger, inhuman in things human, heedless in things divine; it forgets the past, neglects the present, does not look on to the future. It is a heart emptied of all the past except the wrongs it has suffered, which lets slip all the present, which has no forecast of the future, no preparation to meet it, unless perchance it be with a view to gratifying its malice. And, that I may briefly sum up the mischief of this dreadful plague, it is a heart which neither fears God nor respects man. See whither these accursed occupations can drag you at their heels, if, as you have begun, you continue to give yourself wholly to them, and leave nothing of yourself for yourself. You are wasting time; and, if I may present myself to you in the character of another Jethro, you,² like Moses, are spending yourself in this foolish labour over these things which are nothing else but torture of spirit, the enfeebling of the mind, the voiding of grace. For the fruit of these things, what is it but spiders' webs?

CHAPTER III

The rulers of the Church ought not to be for ever bearing and deciding lawsuits

4. Tell me, pray, what is the good of litigating from morning till evening, or of listening to litigants? And would that sufficient unto the day were the evil thereof! The nights are

¹ Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

² Exod. xviii. 18.

not free. There is hardly enough time left to give the poor body a little rest and satisfy the needs of nature; once again up! and to the strife. Day vomits forth lawsuits unto day, and night declares evil unto night, until it is not possible to take breath in goodness, nor snatch a little rest by way of change, nor find even a few scattered intervals of leisure. I have no doubt that you as well as I deplore these things; but what is the good of that if you do not strive to amend them? Still, until you do amend them, I exhort you to go on ever deploring them, and not allow yourself to grow hardened in them through any familiarity with them or unremitting application to them. 'I have smitten them,' saith God, 'and they have not grieved.'¹ Have nothing in common with such persons. Rather make it your care to appropriate both the feeling and the words of the righteous man who says, 'What is my strength that I should endure? or what is mine end, that I should be patient? My strength is not the strength of stones, nor is my flesh of brass.'² Great is the virtue of patience; but I could not wish for you patience in these things. It is sometimes more laudable to be impatient. You surely do not approve of the patience of those people to whom Paul was wont to say, 'Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.'³ Unless I am deceived, the Apostle spoke ironically, not by way of praise; he is flouting the tameness of certain individuals, who, as it were, put out their hands to the false apostles by whom they had been seduced, and allowed themselves most patiently to be carried away by their teachers into all sorts of strange and corrupt doctrines. And so he adds, 'For ye endure if a man bring you into bondage.'⁴ Patience is not good, if, when you may be free, you allow yourself to

¹ Jer. v. 3.² Job vi. 11.³ 2 Cor. xi. 19.⁴ Ibid. 20.

become a slave. I would not have you disguise the slavery into which, though you know it not, you are daily brought. It is a sign of a heart waxed gross, that it does not feel its own continual vexation. 'Vexation causes a report to be understood,' saith one.¹ True; but only if it be not excessive. For if it be, it clearly does not cause the mischief to be understood, but to be despised. In fact, when the wicked man reaches the depths of wickedness, he despiseth it.² Rouse yourself, therefore, and not only guard against, but dread, the yoke of the worst of all slaveries at this very moment threatening you, nay rather already pressing with no light weight upon you. Are you therefore not a slave because you are the slave not of one but of all? There is no more disgraceful slavery, none worse, than that of the Jews; whithersoever they go they drag the chain, and everywhere displease their masters. Tell me, pray, when you are ever free, ever safe, ever your own. Everywhere is bustle, noise, and confusion; everywhere the yoke of your slavery galls you.

CHAPTER IV

What service is worthy, what unworthy, of the servants of God

5. And you must not confront me with the Apostle's saying, 'Though I were free from all I made myself the bond-servant of all.'³ That is far from being your case. Did he

¹ Isa. xxviii. 19. *Vexatio dat intellectum auditui*. R.V. has, 'It shall be nought but terror to understand the message (or report).' Cheyne translates the Hebrew, 'It shall be simply a terror to understand the tidings.' *Auditus* has the meaning *report* in St. John xii. 38.

² Prov. xviii. 3.

³ 1 Cor. ix. 19.

by this service make himself the slave of men in their acquisition of filthy lucre? Did men full of ambition, avaricious, simoniacal, sacrilegious, keepers of concubines, incestuous, all sorts of human monsters such as these, come streaming to him from all over the world, so that by means of his apostolic authority they might obtain, or retain, ecclesiastical distinctions? The reason why the man to whom to live was Christ, and to die was gain—the reason why he made himself a bondservant was that he might gain the more for Christ, not that he might increase the gains of avarice. You must not, therefore, make Paul's great shrewdness, zeal, and love so free, a plea for the life of a slave which you lead. How much more worthy of your apostleship, how much more wholesome for your conscience, how much more fruitful for the Church of God, if you would rather attend to his words elsewhere, 'Ye are bought with a price, refuse to be made the servants of men.'¹ What is more servile and unworthy, specially of the chief pontiff, than, I do not say every day, but almost every hour, to toil at such things, and for such people? When, then, are we to pray? when to teach our people? when to build up the Church? when to meditate in the law? I know, of course, that the palace every day re-echoes with the sound of the laws, but they are the laws of Justinian,² not those of the Lord. Is that as it ought to be? See for yourself. Surely, the law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls.³ But these are not so much laws as lawsuits and sophistical arguments subverting judgement. How is it then, pray tell me, that you the shepherd and bishop of souls can endure to have the law of the Lord stand dumb before you, while these laws never cease to chatter? I am mistaken if this perversity does not cause you some anxiety. I suppose that sometimes it even makes you

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 20.² See above, *Hist. Introd.*³ Ps. xix. 7.

cry to the Lord with the prophet, 'The wicked have told me tales, but not according to Thy law.'¹ Go then, and dare to profess yourself a free man while you have this heavy load of inconsistency upon your shoulders, from which you cannot escape. For if you have the power and not the will, so much the more are you the slave of this very perverse will of yours. Is he not a slave who is ruled by iniquity? He is the worst of all slaves. Unless, perchance, in your judgement there is less dishonour in being governed by a vice than by a man. What difference does it make whether you serve willingly or against your will? For though compulsory slavery be more pitiable, slavery deliberately sought is more lamentable. 'And what,' say you, 'do you wish me to do?' I would have you give yourself some respite from these occupations. 'Impossible,' you will perhaps reply; 'I could more easily bid farewell to the chair.' A good reply if I were urging you to break them off altogether, and not rather to have some break in them.

CHAPTER V

The Pope should not be so absorbed in other men's affairs as to neglect himself

6. Let me then put before you my rejoinder, and offer you my advice. If you give all your life and all your wisdom to action, and nothing to consideration, do I praise you? in this I praise you not. I suppose no one would who has heard Solomon's words, 'He that hath little business shall become wise.'² Action itself certainly does not fare well unless

¹ Ps. cxix, 85.

² Eccclus. xxxviii, 25.

preceded by consideration. If you wish to belong altogether to other people, like him who was made all things to all men,¹ I praise your humanity, but only on condition that it be complete. But how can it be complete if you yourself are left out? You, too, are a man. So then, in order that your humanity may be entire and complete, let your bosom, which receives all, find room for yourself also. Otherwise, according to the word of the Lord, what does it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own self?² Wherefore, though all possess you, take care that you are one among them. Why are you alone defrauded of your reward? How long will you be 'a wind that passeth away and cometh not again'?³ Will the time never come when you will in turn receive yourself among the rest? You are a debtor both to the wise and to the foolish; and are you the only one to whom you deny yourself? Wise and foolish, bond and free, rich and poor, male and female, old and young, cleric and layman, righteous and wicked, all alike share in you, all drink at the public fountain of your heart; and will you stand apart and thirst? If he is cursed who impairs his inheritance, what are we to say of him who strips himself of it altogether? By all means let your waters stream down into the streets; let men and flocks and herds drink thereof, nay let the servants of Abraham give drink even to the camels; but among the rest do you yourself drink of the water of your own well. 'Let not a stranger', saith the Scripture, 'drink thereat.'⁴ Are you a stranger? To whom are you not a stranger, if you are one to yourself? In short, if a man is bad to himself, to whom is he good?⁵ So remember, I do not say *always*, I do not say *often*, but at least *sometimes*, to restore yourself to yourself. Among the

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 22.² St. Matt. xvi. 26.³ Ps. lxxviii. 39.⁴ Prov. v. 17.⁵ Eccles. xiv. 5.

many, or at all events after the many, do you also make use of yourself. Can I make a more liberal concession to you? For what I say, I say to spare you, not according to my strict judgement. I suppose that in this respect I am more indulgent even than the Apostle himself. 'More, then,' you reply, 'than I ought to be.' I do not deny it. But suppose the Apostle's standard be the right one, it matters not, for I am confident you will not be satisfied with my timid outline¹ of your duty, but will more abound. It is certainly more fitting that you should abound than that I should be too bold. I also think it safer for myself in dealing with your Majesty to err on the side of timidity than of rashness. And perhaps this is the way a wise man should be admonished if the Scripture is to be fulfilled—'Give a wise man an opportunity and he will be still wiser'.²

CHAPTER VI

The administration of justice concerns temporal governors rather than bishops

7. Still I would have you hear what the Apostle thinks about this. 'Is it so that there is not a wise man among you,' he says, 'who may judge between brother and brother?'³ And he adds, 'I say this to move you to shame; those who are of less account in the church, set them to judge.'⁴ So, according to the Apostle, apostolic man though you are, you usurp a mean office unworthy of you, and descend to the level of those who are of less account. Hence it is that as bishop,

¹ Or, 'Instruction.' *Informator* was in mediaeval Latin a school-master.

² Prov. ix. 9.

³ 1 Cor. vi. 5.

⁴ Ibid. v. 4.

instructing a bishop, the Apostle said, 'No soldier of God entangleth himself in the affairs of this life.'¹ But I spare you. For my aim is not to speak strongly, but to point out what is possible. Do you think the times would endure it, if, when men are wrangling over an earthly inheritance, and are clamouring for your judgement, you were to answer them in the words of your Lord, 'Men, who made Me a judge over you?''² What sort of a judgement would be pronounced on you? Something like this—'What says this ignorant boor, disregarding his primacy, dishonouring the sovereign see, disparaging the apostolic dignity?' And yet, I suppose, the critics could not point to a single instance of an apostle sitting as a judge of men, a fixer of land-marks, or a distributor of lands. In fact I read that the apostles stood to be judged, not that they sat to judge.³ The time for judging will come; it is not yet. Does the servant really degrade himself if he does not wish to be greater than his lord, or the disciple if he does not wish to be greater than he who sent him, or a son if he does not overpass the bounds which his fathers set? 'Who made Me a judge?''⁴ said our great Lord and Master. And shall any wrong be done to the servant and disciple if he does not judge all mankind? In my opinion the man who thinks it unworthy of apostles or apostolic men, to whom judgement over greater matters has been committed, to refrain from judging in these smaller ones, does not understand the relative value of things. Why should they not scorn to give judgement concerning men's poor earthly possessions, seeing that they shall judge heavenly things, and angels too? Your jurisdiction, therefore, is over criminal cases, not over property; if indeed it is for the former pur-

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 4.² St. Luke xii. 14.³ Acts v. 27.⁴ St. Luke xii. 14.

pose, not for the latter, that you have received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which will, I presume, shut out men because they are transgressors, not because they are owners of property. 'That ye may know,' our Lord says, 'that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.'¹ Which seems to you the greater dignity and power, that of forgiving sins, or that of dividing estates? The truth is that there is no comparison between them. These lower earthly things have their own judges, the kings and princes of the earth. Why trespass on another man's province? Why put your sickle into another man's harvest? Not that men in your position are unworthy, but because to devote yourselves to such matters when you have enough to do with better is unworthy of you. Finally, where necessity requires, this is what the Apostle thinks—'If the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?'²

CHAPTER VII

*Nothing more deserving of consideration than
piety and things eternal*

8. But it is one thing now and then for some urgent reason to turn aside to these matters; it is another of your own accord to apply yourself to them as if they were of such importance as to deserve the earnest attention of your exalted rank. Accordingly, if I wished to speak strongly, or with perfect sincerity say all that is right, I should say all that I have said and a vast deal besides. But as things are, for the days are evil,³ it is enough now that you have been

¹ St. Matt. ix. 6.² 1 Cor. vi. 2.³ Eph. v. 16.

admonished not to give yourself up altogether, nor at all times, to the active life, but to set apart some portion of your heart and of your time for consideration. But in saying this I have regard to the necessity laid upon you, not to the claims of righteousness : albeit there is no unrighteousness in yielding to necessity. For if the fitting were possible, reason unanswerably shows that piety, which is profitable for all things, should under all conceivable circumstances be distinctly preferred, and that it ought, either alone or above all else, to be studiously cultivated. Do you ask what piety is? It is leaving time for consideration. You may perhaps tell me that herein I differ from him who defines piety as 'the worship of God'.¹ I do not really differ from him. If you well consider the point you will find that I have expressed his meaning in my own words, only partly, however, I admit. What is so essential to the worship of God as the practice to which He exhorts in the psalm, 'Be still and see that I am God'?² This certainly is the chief object of consideration. Is anything, in all respects, so influential as consideration? Does it not by a kindly anticipation create the divisions of the active life itself, in a manner rehearsing and arranging beforehand what has to be done? There must be consideration lest haply affairs which foreseen and premeditated might turn out well, may, if precipitated, be fraught with peril. I have no doubt, if you will recall the incidents, you will find that in law cases, important business of various kinds, or in weighty deliberations, you have yourself frequently had this sorrowful experience. First of all, consideration purifies the very fountain, that is the mind, from which it springs. Then it governs the affections, directs our actions, corrects excesses, softens the manners, adorns and regulates the life, and, lastly, bestows

¹ Job xxviii. 28.² Ps. xlv. 10.

the knowledge of things divine and human alike. It is consideration that brings order out of disorder, puts in the links, pulls things together, investigates mysteries, traces the truth, weighs probabilities, exposes shams and counterfeits. It is consideration which arranges beforehand what is to be done, and ponders what is accomplished, so that nothing faulty, or needing correction, may settle in the mind. It is consideration which in prosperity feels the sting of adversity, in adversity is as though it felt not; the one is fortitude, the other is prudence.

CHAPTER VIII

The four primary virtues

9. And herein you may observe a delightfully harmonious connexion between the virtues, and their dependence one upon another. In the present instance, for example, Prudence is the mother of Fortitude, nor ought any deed of daring to be called fortitude, but rather rashness, if it be not the child of prudence. It is consideration, too, which sits as it were umpire of the strife between our pleasures and our necessities, settles the boundaries on either side, allotting and allowing to the latter what is sufficient, taking from the former what is excessive, and then from both fashioning a third virtue known as Temperance. For consideration deems the man who denies himself what is necessary no less intemperate than the man who indulges to excess. Temperance, therefore, consists not only in cutting down superfluities, but in allowing necessities. The Apostle appears to be not merely the supporter of this view, but its author, for he teaches us that the care of our

flesh is not perfected in the gratification of its desires.¹ When he says that the 'care of the flesh is not perfected', he checks all excess; when he adds 'in the gratification of its desires', he does not exclude what is necessary. I therefore think there is good sense in the definition of Temperance given by the writer who tells us that it neither cuts off what is necessary, nor goes beyond it. This agrees with the philosopher's maxim, 'Moderation in all things.'

10. Now as regards Justice, which is one of the four, is it not certain that there must be previous consideration in order that Justice may be a mental habit? The mind must first reflect upon itself in order that it may frame a rule of Justice, and not be inclined to do to another what it would not have done to itself, nor refuse to another what it desires for itself. These two assuredly comprise the whole sphere of Justice. But Justice does not abide alone. Permit me to point out to you the beautifully close and harmonious connexion which exists between it and Temperance, and between both these and the two former virtues, Prudence and Fortitude. For if it be a part of Justice to refrain from doing to another man what we would not have done to ourselves, and if perfect Justice,² as our Lord says, consists in doing to other men whatsoever we would they should do to us, neither of these will be possible unless the will itself, which entirely determines the nature of an action, be so ordered that it neither desires anything superfluous, nor superstitiously refuses anything necessary; and this is the work of Temperance. In a word, if Justice itself is to be just, it must be regulated by Temperance. 'Be not righteous over much' saith the wise man,³ showing us hereby that Justice without the curb and

¹ Rom. xiii. 14, apparently.

² St. Matt. vii. 12.

³ Eccles. vii. 16.

restraint of Temperance is by no means to be approved. It is noteworthy that Wisdom itself does not refuse the bridle of Temperance, for Paul, according to the wisdom given to him by God, bids us not to be wiser than we ought, but to be soberly wise.¹ But, on the other hand, that Temperance cannot dispense with Justice, our Lord shows us in the Gospel, when He rebukes the temperance of those who abstained that they might seem to men to fast.² There was temperance in respect of food, but there was not justice in the heart, because their aim was not to please God but to please men. Again, how can you have either one or the other unless you have Fortitude, since Fortitude, and no slight Fortitude, is required, if what you desire, and what you decline, are to be confined to the narrow channel which lies between too little on the one side, and too much on the other, so that the will may be content with that bare, unmixed, unalloyed, consistent, nicely balanced, as it were neatly trimmed, moderation, which alone, we are agreed, partakes of the quality of virtue.

11. Tell me, pray, if you can, to which particularly of these three virtues you think this middle place should be given, which so borders upon all that it seems to belong to each. Are virtue and the mean identical? If so, virtue would not be manifold, but all the virtues would be included in one. Is it not better to maintain that unless the mean be kept there can be no virtue? and that this middle region of which we speak is in a sense the very pith and marrow of all virtues, wherein they are so united that they must all seem to be one, all the more because by sharing in it they do not divide it, but it is as an unbroken whole the property of each? For example, what is so characteristic of Justice as Moderation? This is so certain, that if Justice be tainted with excess, it clearly

¹ Rom. xii. 3.

² St. Matt. vi. 16.

does not give to every man his due ; yet this giving to every man his due is the very object of Justice. Again, what is more characteristic of Temperance, which is surely what it is for no other reason than that it allows nothing immoderate ? But you will, I suppose, admit that the observance of the mean is no less a mark of Fortitude. Is not Fortitude above all things necessary to put forth its power and rescue Moderation from the assaults of vices which on every side try to strangle it ? And once it is free, is it not Fortitude that makes it a solid foundation of goodness, and the abode of virtue ? Therefore, to keep the mean is Justice, Temperance, Fortitude. Perhaps the difference between them may be thus stated—Justice is concerned with the affections ; Fortitude makes Justice efficacious ; possession as well as use are the domain of Temperance. It remains for us to show that Prudence is not excluded from this communion of the virtues. Is it not Prudence which first discovers and gives attention to Moderation when it has been too long neglected and despised, imprisoned as it were through the jealousy of the vices, and hidden out of sight in the darkness of inveterate habit ? Why do I tell you this ? Few pay attention to Prudence because few possess it. So Justice seeks, Prudence finds, Fortitude frees, Temperance possesses. I do not propose to now discuss these virtues, but this much I would say because I am urging you to find some time for consideration, through whose kindly service these and such like truths receive the attention they deserve. To bestow no labour in life on securing leisure so pious and so profitable, is not this to lose life itself ?

CHAPTER IX

The recent practice of the Pope to be gradually corrected, the old imitated

12. But suppose you were unexpectedly to devote yourself entirely to this philosophy. Your predecessors were not wont so to do; you will be a nuisance to all the world, inasmuch as you are not walking in the footsteps of your fathers; and, what is more, it will seem as though your conduct were designed to flout them. Besides this, you will be a target for the familiar proverb—‘the man who does what nobody else does is a marvel to everybody’; it will be hinted that you have a passion for admiration. And you cannot all at once, or altogether, either correct the faults of your critics or moderate their excesses. After a time you will be able, according to the wisdom given to you by God, little by little and as occasion offers, to take the business in hand. Meanwhile, by all means turn another man’s badness to good account; this you can do. Still, if we are to follow that which is good, not that which is new, there have not been wanting Roman pontiffs who found leisure in the midst of the weightiest affairs. When the city was besieged, and the sword of the barbarians was over the necks of the citizens, was Pope Gregory thereby deterred from writing words of wisdom at his leisure? At that very time, forsooth, as appears from his preface, he expounded with no less diligence than elegance the concluding and most obscure portion of Ezekiel.

CHAPTER X

The shameless trickery of advocates, judges, and procurators

13. 'Very good', you say, 'but different customs now prevail, we live in other days, and men's manners have changed; dangerous times are not only coming but have come. Deceit, and guile, and violence have grown strong upon the earth. Pettifoggers abound, a defender¹ of the right is rare, everywhere the strong oppress the poor; we dare not fail to succour the oppressed, we cannot refuse justice to the sufferers. Unless causes are pleaded, and both sides heard, how can judgement be given between the parties.' My reply is this—Let the causes be pleaded, but in the proper way. For the prevalent practice is most execrable, and such as does not become even the forum, let alone the Church. It is a marvel to me how your religious ears can bear to listen to the disputes of advocates² of this class, and to their battles of words,

¹ Honorius, Emperor of the West, at the request of African Councils, appointed in A.D. 407 lay 'defenders' (*defensores*) of the Church, to watch over its privileges and maintain its rights, so that the clergy should not be obliged to appear personally in secular courts. (Robertson, *Ch. Hist.* vol. i. p. 573.) 'In Rome, beginning with Innocent I (A.D. 402-417) the Defenders became by the time of Gregory the Great a regular order of officers whose duties were (i) to defend Church interests generally, (ii) to take care of alms left for the poor, (iii) to go to help applicants from a distance for Papal protection, (iv) to look after outlying estates belonging to St. Peter's patrimony.' At that time there were seven such officers, each with his own region. They were usually laymen, but sometimes clerics, and held a sort of ecclesiastical position. (*Dict. of Christian Antiq.* vol. i. p. 33.)

² Advocates, Defenders, or *Vicedomini* (French *Vidames*) arose in Gaul during the sixth and seventh centuries. Except in name they bore

which avail more to the subversion of the truth than to its discovery. Correct the corrupt custom, cut off the tongues that speak vanity, close the deceitful lips. These are they who have taught their tongue to utter lies; they are clever in withstanding justice, learned in defending falsehood. They are wise to do evil, eloquent to assail the truth. These are they who venture to instruct their teachers, who invent their facts, blackmail the innocent, destroy the simplicity of truth, obstruct the ways of judgement. Nothing so easily brings virtue to light as a brief and simple narrative. So then, when cases must come before you—they need not by any means all come—I should like you to decide them with care, but summarily, and so cut short these dilatory adjournments which mean nothing but the hunting of the prey. Let the cause of the widow come unto you, the cause of the poor, and of him who hath nothing to give. You will be able to hand over many other causes to various persons to dispose of; the vast majority you will not deem even worthy of a hearing. For what need is there to admit to your presence men whose sins

no resemblance to the 'defenders' of the earlier ages. They defended the bishops and clergy against their rude and lawless neighbours, acted as secular judges, led the contingents to the army furnished by church estates, &c. Charlemagne made the appointment of such a champion for every church compulsory. The champion was usually a powerful layman, and his reward was the use of land belonging to the church and adjacent to his own. The 'advocates' gradually became tyrants instead of protectors, neglected their duty, usurped the right of nominating to the church or abbey, made the office hereditary, and treated the property of the Church as if it were their own. The monasteries were especially oppressed by their 'defenders', who often paid largely to the sovereign for the privilege of defending them. Councils in England restricted these usurpations as early as the Council of Beccaneld (A.D. 696) and Clovesho, most probably Cliff-at-Hoe near Rochester (A.D. 803). In St. Bernard's time (A.D. 1148) the Council of Rheims dealt with the subject in its sixth Canon. Robertson, *Ch. Hist., Dict. of Christ. Antiq., &c.*

clearly go before to judgement? So gigantic is the impudence of some men, that though their causes bear on their very face the swarming scabs of ambition, they do not blush to demand a hearing, thus revealing themselves to the consciences of the multitude, a tribunal before which they would, as in the judgement of even their own conscience, be confounded. There was no one to check their effrontery; so the numbers grew, and they lost all sense of shame. But, oddly enough, a vicious man does not shun the consciences of other vicious men, and where all are filthy, the stench of one is hardly noticed. For instance, when did an avaricious man ever blush for another avaricious man, the unclean for the unclean, the luxurious for the luxurious? The Church is full of ambitious men; the time has gone by for being shocked at the enterprising efforts of ambition; we think no more of it than a robber's cave thinks of the spoils of the wayfarers.

CHAPTER XI

Such iniquitous greed to be sternly rebuked

14. If you are a disciple of Christ, let your zeal kindle, let your authority arise against this impudence and widespread pestilence. Look to your Master, see what He does, listen as He says 'Let my servant follow me.'¹ He does not prepare ears to hear, but a scourge wherewith to smite. He neither utters words nor attends to them. For he is not sitting to judge, but pursuing to punish. Nevertheless, he plainly indicts the offenders—they had made the house of prayer a place of merchandise. Do you follow His example.

¹ St. John xii. 26.

Let traffickers of this description blush before your countenance, if possible; if that may not be, let them be afraid. You have the scourge in your hand. Let the money-changers fear; let them not trust in their money, but distrust its power; let them hide their money from you because they know you are more ready to pour it out than to accept it. By earnestly and constantly acting thus you will gain many, because you will win over to more honourable pursuits those who follow after filthy lucre, and you will preserve many from even daring to attempt anything of the kind. And there is something else. There will be a substantial increase in the leisure time which I am urging you to secure, for you will thus redeem not a few brief intervals to devote to leisurely consideration, sometimes by not hearing the business at all, on other occasions by entrusting it to some one else. When you deem the matter worthy to be heard by yourself, by judging the case on its merits you will save both time and expense. I am thinking of adding a few remarks on this topic, but I prefer to do so at the beginning of another book. Here let me end. I am afraid you may not only find my matter unpleasant, but think me tedious.

BOOK II

[Eugenius had delegated to St. Bernard the office of preaching the Second Crusade (A. D. 1147), which ended in 'utter and hopeless failure'. 'Soon', says Mr. Cotter Morison (*Life and Times of St. Bernard*, p. 417), 'from the broad population of Europe, a murmur of wrath and reproach was heard, which, rising in every swelling volume, at last broke into articulate utterance, and thundered out the name "Bernard" with every mark of anger and resentment. . . . Bernard was accused and reviled as the author of the calamities which had overtaken the Crusade. Why did he preach it? Why did he prophesy success? Why did he work miracles to make men join it, if this was to be the result?' In the opening portion of this book the Saint answers these questions and attempts to justify himself.

He next points out the four subjects worthy of consideration—*yourself, things beneath you, things around you, things above you*, and admonishes Eugenius to consider *who* he is, and, as to the dignity of his profession, *what* he is. First, he is to reflect whence he is descended, which may serve to abate his pride. His authority over all churches is for service, not for arbitrary dominion. If he grasps at civil and ecclesiastical supremacy, he deserves to lose both. Secondly, Eugenius is not only 'supreme pastor over all the flocks, but likewise over all the shepherds'. Nevertheless, he must remember that the dignity which has been superadded to him has not been able to divest him of his nature. Born a man, he is still a man, and ought to consider himself as a man. 'Draw the veil which covers you, disperse the clouds that environ you, and you will find yourself a poor, naked, wretched creature—in a word, born in sin, with a short life abounding in miseries, and full of fears and complaints.' Thirdly, Eugenius is to consider his manners and conduct, and, in conclusion, is exhorted to the pursuit of various virtues.—*Du Pin, &c.*]

CHAPTER I

*St. Bernard apologizes for the failure of the
Second Crusade*

1. I remember, dear Eugenius, Father in God and best of men, the promise which I made, alas ! too long ago. Now, late though it be, I propose to redeem my pledge. I should be ashamed of the delay if I were conscious of carelessness or contempt. This is not the case ; but, as you yourself know, we have fallen on evil times ; it seemed as though our social life, not to speak of our studies, was doomed to come to a standstill ; it was as though the Lord, provoked by our sins, were almost judging the world before the time, with equity indeed, but forgetful of his mercy. He has not spared the people, nor His own Name. Do they not say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God’? ¹ And no wonder. The sons of the Church, and they who bear the Christian name, lie prostrate in the desert, slain with the sword, or perished with hunger. Floods of strife have overwhelmed our rulers, and the Lord has made them to wander in the waste, where there is no way. ² Tribulation and misfortune are in their ways, terror, sorrow, and confusion in the chambers of kings themselves. ³ Confusion dogs the footsteps of those that bring tidings of peace, that announce good things ! ⁴ We said ‘peace’, and there is no peace ; we promised good things, and lo ! perplexity. It might be supposed we had

¹ Ps. xlii. 10.² Ps. cvii. 40.³ Ps. xiii. 3, *Vulg.* Isa. lix. 7. See also Sanday and Headlam, Rom. iii. 15-17.⁴ Isa. lii. 7.

therein been light or rash. We certainly ran therein not as uncertainly, but at your command, nay, rather at God's command given through you. Why then have we fasted, and He hath not beheld? humbled our souls, and He knew not? For in all these things His fury is not turned from us, but His hand is stretched out still. How patiently, meanwhile, doth He listen to the impious words of the blasphemous Egyptians, 'He craftily led them out that He might slay them in the desert.'¹ We all know that the judgements of the Lord are true.² But this judgement is such a great deep that I could almost justify myself for calling him blessed who is not offended thereat.

2. Still, how strange it is that men are so rash as to dare to reprehend what they cannot possibly comprehend! Let us call to mind the judgements of former times, which have been since the world began, if haply we may find consolation in them. For one spoke on this wise, 'I have remembered thy judgements of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself.'³ I speak of what everybody knew, and now nobody knows. Forsooth this is the way with the wit of man. Knowledge is sometimes superfluous: when we need it, we have it not. Moses, when about to lead the people out of the land of Egypt, promised them a better land. Otherwise, had they known that land only, were they ever likely to follow him? He led them out, but when they were led out he did not lead them into the land which he had promised.⁴ Nor can the sad and unlooked-for issue be attributed to the rashness of the leader. He did everything as the Lord commanded, the Lord working with him, and confirming his work by signs following. But that people, you say, was stiff-necked, always

¹ Ex. xxxii. 12.² Ps. xix. 9.³ Ps. cxix. 52.⁴ Deut. xxxii. 52, &c.

stubbornly opposing the Lord and his servant Moses. Well ! they were faithless and rebellious ; but what are these ? Ask them. What need for me to say what they themselves confess ? One thing I do say. How could they reach their journey's end who were always turning back on the road ? Was there ever a time in their whole journey when they were not in their heart turning back into Egypt ? But if they fell and perished on account of their iniquity, can we wonder that our contemporaries with the same conduct have the same experience ? But was their fall contrary to the promises of God ? No, nor has the fall of these latter been. For the promises of God never prejudice the righteousness of God. And something else I wish to say.

3. Benjamin hath sinned : ¹ the other tribes gird themselves for vengeance, and not without God's approval. In fact He himself appointed the leader of the army. So they fight, relying both on the stronger force and on the better cause, and, what is more, on the divine favour. But how terrible is God in His purposes towards the children of men ! ² The avengers of wickedness gave their backs to the accursed, and the many fled before the few. But they return to the Lord, and the Lord bids them go up. ³ They go up afresh, and again they are scattered and confounded. So at first with God's favour, and then at God's command, the righteous engage in a righteous contest, and nevertheless are overcome. But they were found as superior in faith as they were inferior in the fight. What do you suppose our forces would make of me if at my exhortation they were again to go up, and again be overcome ? Are they likely to listen to me if I were to advise them for the third time to march, and resume the work in which once and again they have been frustrated ? And yet the

¹ Judges xx. 2.

² Ps. lxvi. 5.

³ Judges xx. 28.

Israelites, taking no account of their double disappointment, obeyed for the third time, and were then victorious. But we shall perhaps be asked, 'How are to know that the word has gone forth from the Lord? What signs do you work, that we may believe you?' It is not for me to answer these questions; I must spare my modesty. Do you answer for me, and for yourself, according as you have heard and seen, or, at all events, according as God has given you inspiration.

4. But you are, perhaps, wondering why I take this line, so different from what I purposed. I do so, not because I have forgotten my purpose, but because I do not consider it foreign to my purpose. If I remember, the subject of my discourse to your Excellency was to be *Consideration*. And certainly the matter to which I have referred is important and requires much consideration. But if great matters ought to be considered by great men, who is so well qualified for the work as yourself, who have no equal upon earth? You will, I am sure, according to the wisdom and power given to you from above, deal with this matter. It is not consistent with my humility to tell you that such and such things should be done. It is enough for me to have intimated that something ought to be done for the consolation of the Church, and to stop the mouth of them that speak wickedly. Let these few remarks stand for my apology, so that whatever your conscience may tell you about me you may from my own lips know enough to excuse me, and yourself also. I cannot hope for this from those who judge by results, but with you I am safe. The testimony of a man's conscience is his only perfect and complete excuse. To me it is a very small matter that I should be judged by those who call good evil and evil good, who put light for darkness and darkness for light.¹ And if one of the two things must

¹ Isa. v. 20.

happen, I had rather that men murmured against us than against God. It is good for me if He condescends to use me as a shield. I gladly welcome the tongues that speak against me, and the poisoned darts of blasphemers, if only they may not reach Him. I do not refuse to be dishonoured if only violence be not done to the glory of God. Who can give me the privilege of glorying thus, 'For thy sake have I suffered reproach, shame hath covered my face'?¹ My glory is to become a partner with Christ, who says, 'the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me.'² Now at last my pen shall return to its proper work, and my discourse go on its way to the goal we set before us.

CHAPTER II

Consideration distinguished from Contemplation

5. And first of all consider the word. I do not wish it to be regarded as exactly synonymous with *contemplation*, because the latter is concerned with the certainty of things, the former more fitly with their investigation. Accordingly, contemplation may be defined as the soul's true unerring intuition, or as the unhesitating apprehension of truth. But consideration is thought earnestly directed to research, or the application of the mind to the search for truth; though in practice the two terms are indifferently used for one another.

¹ Ps. lxi., 7.

² Ibid. v. 10.

CHAPTER III

*Consideration fourfold—(1) The Pope himself,
(2) things below him, (3) things around him,
(4) things above him*

6. Now as regards the fruit of consideration, I think there are, as they occur to me, four subjects worthy of your consideration—yourself, things below you, things around you, and things above you. Let your consideration begin with yourself, lest, while you neglect yourself, you waste your energies on other things. What does it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your single self?¹ Though you be wise, you lack wisdom to yourself, if you do not belong to yourself. But how far do you lack wisdom? In my opinion, altogether. Though you know all mysteries, though you know the breadth of the earth, the height of the heavens, the depth of the sea, if you know not yourself, you will be like a man building without a foundation, and will succeed not in rearing an edifice, but in making a ruin. Whatever structure you raise outside yourself will be like a heap of dust before the wind. He, therefore, is not wise who is not wise to himself. The wise man will be wise to himself, and will first of all drink of his own well. Let, then, your consideration begin at yourself; and not only so, let it end there. Whithersoever it may roam, recall it to yourself, and it will bring with it the fruit of salvation. To yourself be first, to yourself be last. Copy the example of the Great Father of all, who both sends forth His word and keeps it with Him. Consideration is your ‘word’; if it goes forth, let it not go away; let it so go on that it go not out; let it so go outside that it be not gone

¹ St. Matt. xvi. 26.

altogether. In winning salvation let no one be nearer and dearer to you than the only one of your mother.¹ Think of nothing contrary to your own salvation. In saying 'contrary', I have said too little; I ought to have said *besides* your salvation. Whatever offers itself to consideration, if it has not some bearing on your own salvation, ought to be rejected.

CHAPTER IV

The threefold Consideration leading to self-knowledge. Firstly, What the Pope is

7. And this consideration of yourself falls into three divisions, if you consider what, who, and what manner of man, you are. The first refers to your nature, the second to your person, and the third to your character. If, for example, it be asked, what? a man; who? pope or chief pontiff; what manner of man? kind, gentle, and so on. The investigation of the first of these may be more the work of a philosopher than of an apostolic man; still, in the definition of a man as a rational mortal animal, there is something which you may, if you choose, carefully ponder. There is nothing in it contrary either to your profession or your rank, but there is something which may contribute to your salvation. For if you consider these two attributes together, rationality and mortality, you gather good fruit—the fact of your mortality humbles your reason, while your reason supports you under the

¹ St. Bernard perhaps has in mind Cant. vi. 8—'My dove, my undefiled (or perfect) is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her.' Symbolically, the 'one dove' is the soul intent upon the highest good . . . *si una uni Deo vacet*. See A Lapide, *Commentary*.

thought of your mortality, and a prudent man will not neglect either side. If the point before us requires further consideration, it shall be dealt with later on, perhaps more profitably, when we pass the whole of our work under review.

CHAPTER V

Secondly, Who the Pope is, and whence he comes

8. We must next notice *who* you are, and what your origin was. I have used the word 'origin', but I think I had better pass that over and leave it to your perception. This I do say, that it would be an unworthy thing for you, knowing the perfection you have left, to stop short of the perfection which lies before you. Should you not blush to be a minnow among the whales when you remember that you were a whale among the minnows? You have not forgotten your first profession; it is taken out of your hands, but you still have some thought for it, and even affection. To keep it in view will not be unprofitable in the framing of your several commands, judgments, ordinances. This consideration makes you a despiser of honour even in the midst of honour. And that is a great thing. Lay it to heart; it is your shield to protect you from the arrow—'Man being in honour is without understanding'.¹ Say, therefore, to yourself, I was of low estate in the house of the Lord. What means this, that, poor and lowly though I was, I am raised to rule over peoples and kingdoms? Who am I, or what is my father's house, that I should sit above dignitaries? He who said to me, 'Friend, go up higher',² surely trusts that I shall be a friend. If I am found less, it is

¹ Ps. xlix. 13.

² St. Luke xiv. 10.

not indeed well with me. He who has raised me up can also cast me down. Too late should I complain, 'Thou hast taken me up and dashed me to the ground.'¹ There must be no flattery of your exalted rank, when there is more cause for anxiety. The rank magnifies the danger, the anxiety manifests the friend! Let us give good heed to this, unless we wish at length with shame to take the lowest place.

CHAPTER VI

The zeal befitting ecclesiastical rulers

9. We cannot disguise the fact that we must most carefully observe why it is that you have been set above other men. I certainly do not think it is that you may exercise lordship over them. For even the prophet, when he was in like manner exalted, was told 'to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow; to build, and to plant'.² Which of these has the ring of pride in it? Is it not more correct to say that the labourer's task typifies spiritual toil? And if we are to think highly of ourselves, we should perceive that a burden of service is laid upon us, not the privilege of lordship bestowed. 'I am not greater than the prophet; and if haply I am his equal in authority, still there is no comparison between our deserts.' Speak thus to yourself, and do you who teach others teach yourself. Suppose you are as one of the prophets. Is not that enough for you? Yes, and more than enough. But by the grace of God you are what you are. What is that? Suppose you are a prophet, are you more than a prophet? If you are wise you will be content with the measure wherewith God hath measured to you. For what is

¹ Ps. cii. 10.² Jer. i. 10.

more is of evil. Learn by the prophet's example to govern, not so much for the purpose of commanding as of doing what the time requires. Learn the lesson that, if you are to do the work of a prophet, what you want is not a sceptre, but a hoe. The prophet does not rise to reign, but to root out the weeds. Do you not think that you, too, may find something to be done in your Master's field? Yes, and plenty of it. The prophets have surely not been able to clean all the ground; they left something for their sons, the apostles, to do; and your progenitors have left something for you. Nor will you prove equal to the whole task. You will assuredly leave something for your successor, and he for others, and so on to the end. Accordingly, we find that about the eleventh hour the labourers were rebuked for idleness, and sent into the vineyard. Your predecessors, the apostles, were told that 'the harvest was indeed plenteous, but the labourers were few'.¹ Claim for yourself the inheritance of your fathers. For if you are son, then you are also the heir.² That you may prove yourself to be the heir, diligently watch, and forgo sluggish ease, lest to you also it be said, Why standest thou here all the day idle?³

10. Much less ought you to be found dissolved in luxury, or proudly exhibiting yourself. The will of the testator bequeaths to you nothing like this. Need I say that if you are content with its provisions you will inherit care and toil rather than glory and riches. Does Peter's chair flatter you? It is a watch-tower whence, in a word, you exercise supervision; the very name of 'bishop' reminds you not of lordship, but of duty. How fitting it is that you are set on high where you can view all things, inasmuch as you are appointed watchman over all. In very truth the legitimate issue of that prospect is not ease, but readiness for battle. Where ease is

¹ St. Matt. ix. 37.² Gal. iv. 7.³ St. Matt. xx. 6.

unlawful, what occasion is there for glorying? And ease is out of the question when you are burdened with the constant care of all the churches. It must be so; for what else did the holy apostle transmit to you? 'Such as I have,' he says, 'give I thee.'¹ What is that? One thing I know—it is not gold, nor silver, for he himself says, 'Silver and gold I have not.'² If you happen to have them, use them not for your own gratification, but to meet the necessities of the time. You will then be using them as though you used them not. In themselves, as regards man's spiritual welfare, they are neither good nor bad; yet the use of them is good, the abuse is bad; anxiety about them is worse; the greed of gain still more disgraceful. Suppose that on the strength of some other plea you may claim them, you cannot do so by apostolic right. For the apostle could not give what he did not himself possess. What he had, that he gave—the care, as I have said, of the churches. Did he bequeath to you lordship over them? Hear what he says, 'Not lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock.'³ And do not suppose that the words were prompted by humility only, and are not based on truth. In the Gospel there is the Lord's warning, 'The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them, and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors.'⁴ And then He adds, 'But ye shall not be so.'⁵ It is quite clear; the apostles are forbidden to exercise lordship.

II. Go then, if you dare, and either, as a lord over God's heritage, assume the office of an apostle, or as an apostolic man exercise lordship. It is clear that you are debarred both. If you wish to have both together, you will lose both. You must

¹ Acts. iii. 6.

² Ibid.

³ 1 Pet. v. 3.

⁴ St. Luke xxii. 25

⁵ Ibid.

otherwise think yourself excepted from the number of those of whom God thus complains, 'They have reigned, but not by me; they have been princes, and I knew it not.'¹ Now if you like to reign without God, you have whereof to glory, but not before God. But if we uphold the prohibition, let us give heed to the commandment, 'He that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.'² Here is the apostolic pattern; lordship is forbidden, service is enjoined; and this latter is also commended by the example of the Lawgiver Himself, who immediately adds, 'but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.'³ Who, then, would think he has nothing whereof to glory when he bears the title by which the Lord of Glory distinguished Himself? Rightly doth Paul glory therein when he says, 'Are they servants of Christ? so am I.'⁴ And then he adds, 'I speak as one beside himself, I more. In labours more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft.' Oh! splendid service. What sovereignty does it not excel in glory? If you must glory, the pattern of the saints is set before you, the glory of the apostles is your model. Does that seem to you insignificant? Oh! that some one would give me the power of becoming like the saints in glory! The prophet cries aloud, 'Thy friends, O God, are too honourable for me, their sovereignty hath grown too strong.'⁵ The apostle exclaims, 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.'⁶

12. I would have you always glory in this the best sort of glory, that which apostles and prophets chose for themselves, and handed on to you. In your abundant labours, in

¹ Hos. viii. 4.

² St. Luke xxii. 26.

³ Ibid. 27.

⁴ 2 Cor. xi. 23.

⁵ Ps. cxxxix. 17.

⁶ Gal. vi. 14.

the cross of Christ, recognize your inheritance. Happy was the man who could say, 'I laboured more than all.'¹ Here is glorying, but there is in it no vanity, no softness, no pride. If the work alarms, the reward invites. For every man shall receive according to his work. And if he laboured more than all, still he did not do all that was to be done, and there is yet room. Go into your Lord's field, and diligently consider the dense thicket of thorns and thistles which, according to the ancient curse, covers the ground even to this day. Go out, I say, into the world; for the field is the world, and it is given into your charge. Go into it, not as a lordly owner, but as a steward, that you may see and attend to that whereof you must give account. Go, I would say; traverse it with steps of zealous care, and careful zeal. For even they who were bidden go into all the world did not compass it with bodily presence, but with their forethought. And do you lift up as it were the eyes of your consideration, and see the lands, if they are not rather dry for burning than white for harvest. How often will what you took for the fruits of the earth, if you examine them carefully, prove to be briars; nay rather, not even briars; they are old and rotten trees, but certainly not fruit trees; their only fruit is swine's food, acorns and husks. How long are they to cumber the ground? If you go out, and clearly see them, will you not be ashamed that your axe is idle? Will you not be ashamed to have had the apostolic sickle put into your hand for nothing?

13. Once upon a time the patriarch Isaac had gone into this field; it was when Rebecca first met him; and, in the words of Scripture, 'he had gone out to meditate.'² He went to meditate, you must go to extirpate. In your case meditation should already have led the way: the time for acting is

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 10.

² Gen. xxiv. 63.

at hand. If you now begin to hesitate, it will be too late. According to the Saviour's counsel,¹ you should have first sat down, and estimated the work, gauged your strength, weighed your wisdom, ascertained the relative value of things, and calculated the cost of virtue. Come then, reckon that there is still time for casting up the account, although the time for meditation on the plan has gone by. If you have given your heart to the work, you must now give your tongue and hand as well. Gird on your sword, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.² Glorify your right hand and arm by taking vengeance upon nations, by rebuking peoples, by binding their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron. If you do these things, you honour both your ministry and yourself the minister. That is no ordinary sovereignty. In virtue of it you drive out evil beasts from your borders, so that your flocks may be safely led into their pastures. You will vanquish the wolves, but not lord it over the sheep, the care of which you of course undertook that you might feed them, not oppress them. If you have well considered who you are, you are not ignorant that this is your duty. Moreover, if you know and do not, it is sin to you.³ You have not forgotten the passage, 'the servant who knew his master's will, and did unworthy things, shall be beaten with many stripes.'⁴ The prophets and apostles were wont to do as I suggest. They were brave in war, not voluptuaries robed in silk. If you are a son of apostles and prophets, do as they did. Prove the nobility of your descent by conduct such as theirs; the only source of their nobility was the ingenuousness of their character, and the fortitude of their faith. Through this they conquered kingdoms, wrought

¹ St. Luke xiv. 28.² Eph. vi. 17.³ St. James iv. 17.⁴ St. Luke xii. 47.

righteousness, gained promises in return.¹ Here is the conveyance of the inheritance of your fathers : I have put it before you, and in it you may see the portion which falls to you. Be clad with fortitude, and the inheritance is yours. Have faith, have wisdom, but the wisdom of the saints, which is the fear of the Lord, and you have what belongs to you. The whole ancestral estate is yours by clear right. Virtue is the richest estate. Humility is a good estate ; founded thereon the whole spiritual edifice grows into a holy temple in the Lord. Through humility some have even possessed the gates of their enemies. For which of the virtues is so mighty to subdue the pride of demons and the tyranny of men ? But though it be to every person alike a tower of strength from the face of the enemy, somehow or other, the greater the man the greater its acknowledged influence ; the more distinguished its possessor, the more distinction it confers. It is eminently so in the case of the chief pontiff. No gem in all his gorgeous attire shines with a clearer and a purer light. For the higher he is above his fellows, the more through his humility he conspicuously surpasses not only other men, but himself also.



CHAPTER VII

Who the Pope is—(continued)

14. I shall perhaps be blamed for leaving the first part of my subject inadequately treated, and going off into the second ; it will be said that my pen is beginning to tell *what manner of man* you ought to be, though it has not fully stated *who* you are. I suppose it blushed to see a man standing naked on the

¹ Heb. xi. 33.

pinnacle of power, and hastened to clothe him in the robes of office. Without these the more clearly you are seen the more unseemly you appear. Can the desolation of a city that is set on a hill be hid? or the smoke of a lamp extinguished on the stand escape detection? We remember 'An ape upon the house-top: a silly king upon the throne'. Now lend me your ears as I sing my song; it may not be altogether pleasant, but it will do you good. 'The union of exalted rank with a base spirit is a monstrosity; so is the joining together of the chief seat and the lowest life; or of a tongue that speaketh great things, and an idle hand; or of much talk, and no fruit; or of a severe look, and light conduct; or of great authority, and no steadfastness. There is the mirror: let the foul countenance recognize itself, but you may rejoice that no resemblance to it is found in yours. Still I would have you look into the mirror lest haply, although you may have good grounds for self-satisfaction, there may not be wanting reasons for dissatisfaction. I would have you glory in the testimony of your conscience, but none the less I would have you humbled by that same testimony. It is seldom a man can say 'I know nothing by myself'.¹ You walk more warily in the ways of goodness if you take care that evil does not lurk there. Wherefore, as I have said, you should know yourself, so that in the difficulties of your position, and such difficulties do exist, you may not only enjoy a good conscience, but, what is more, may also learn your defects. For who is free from defects? He lacks everything who thinks he lacks nothing. What if you are sovereign pontiff? Does it follow that because you are sovereign pontiff you are supremely perfect? Let me tell you that you are at the bottom if you think you are at the top. Who is at the top? He to whom nothing can

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 4.

be added. You greatly err if you think you are the man. God forbid! You are not of those who make dignities identical with virtues. You knew what virtue was before you were acquainted with rank. Let emperors and others who have not been afraid to be worshipped as divine enjoy that opinion:¹ Nebuchadnezzar for example, Alexander, Antiochus, Herod. As for yourself, consider that you bear the title of 'supreme' not absolutely, but relatively. And when I say this, do not suppose that I am comparing your merits with other men's. I refer to functions of the ministry. Let a man so account of you as of a minister of Christ, and, without prejudice to the holiness of any one, beyond dispute the chief of ministers. I would you strove to be supreme in other respects, and did not think yourself supreme, or wish to be so regarded before you are. For how can you be proficient if you are already self-sufficient? It follows that there must be no reluctance to find out what is lacking, or you will have to confess that you lack modesty. Say with your predecessor, 'Not as though I had received, or were already perfect.'² And again, 'I count not myself to have apprehended.'³ This is the knowledge of the saints; it is far from that which puffeth up. He who adds this knowledge adds sorrow,⁴ but it is a sorrow which no wise man ever seeks to escape. It is, forsooth, a healing sorrow, by means of which the deadly stupor of a hard and impenitent heart is excluded. This is why we deem him a wise man who could say 'My sorrow is ever in my sight'.⁵ I must now gather up the fragments, if any remain, of the topic from which not long ago we turned aside.

¹ Viz. that dignities are identical with virtues.

² Phil. iii. 12.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Eccles. i. 18.

⁵ Ps. xxxviii. 17.

CHAPTER VIII

The dignity and power of the Pope

15. Come, let us still more closely investigate *what* you are, that is to say, the character you represent for a time in the Church of God. Who are you? the chief priest, the sovereign pontiff. You are the prince of bishops, the head of the apostles; in priority you are Abel, in government Noah, as a patriarch you are Abraham, in order Melchisedech, in rank Aaron, in authority Moses, as a judge you are Samuel, in power Peter, in virtue of your anointing you are Christ. You are he to whom the keys have been committed, and the sheep entrusted. There are, indeed, other door-keepers of heaven, and other shepherds of flocks, but as you have received both names in a manner different from the rest, so for you they bear a more glorious meaning. Other pastors have each their several flocks assigned to them; to you all the flocks have been entrusted, one flock under one shepherd. Do you ask for proof of that? It is the Lord's word. For to which, I will not say of the bishops, but of the apostles, have all the sheep been committed so absolutely and unreservedly? 'If you love me, Peter, feed my sheep.'¹ What sheep? Are we to say the people of such and such a city, or region, or, at all events, kingdom? 'My sheep', He says. Is it not clear that He has not specified some, but committed to him all? There is no exception where there is no distinction. And perhaps the fellow disciples of Peter were present when our Lord by charging him, and no one else, with the care of all the flocks, commended to them all the unity of one

¹ St. John xxi. 15.

flock and one shepherd, according as it is written, 'My dove, my beautiful, my perfect, is but one.'¹ Where there is unity there is perfection. The other numbers are not perfect, but admit of division, falling short of unity. Hence it is that other bishops, understanding the mystery, have shared the various nations between them. In fact, James, who seemed to be a pillar of the Church,² was content with Jerusalem, and gave up universal dominion to Peter.³ Admirably was James placed there to raise up seed to his dear Brother in the place where his Brother was slain, for he was the Lord's brother. Now if the Lord's brother yielded to Peter, what other man can dare to trespass on Peter's prerogative?

16. So then, according to your own authorities, other bishops are called to a share in responsibility, you are called to the exercise of plenary power. The power of other men is confined within fixed limits; yours extends to those who have power over their fellows. Have you not power, for sufficient reason, to shut heaven against a bishop, and even deliver him to Satan? Your prerogative, therefore, whether the power of the keys or the pastorate of the flocks, is unassailable. Let me point out something else no less confirmatory of your prerogative. The disciples were in a boat when our Lord appeared,⁴ and, which was more delightful still, appeared in His risen body. Peter, knowing that it was the Lord, cast himself into the sea, and thus reached his Master, while the rest came in the boat. What does that mean? It was surely a sign of the unique pontificate of Peter, intended to show that while the others had charge, each of his own ship, he was entrusted with not one ship, but the government of the whole world. For the sea is the world, and ships are churches. Hence

¹ Cant. vi. 8.² Gal. ii. 9.³ Ibid. i. 19.⁴ St. John xxi. 3, 4.

it is that on another occasion, like his Lord, he walked upon the water, and thus proved himself the one and only Vicar of Christ, destined to rule over not one people, but all, that is if the 'many waters' are 'many peoples'.¹ So then while each of the other bishops has his own ship, you are in command of the greatest, the Universal Church throughout the world, the sum of all the other churches put together.

CHAPTER IX

St. Bernard invites the Pope to consider what he is by nature

17. Now we see *who* you are; but do not forget *what* you are. I, at all events, have not forgotten my promise to return to that point on a fitting occasion. And is it not most fitting to combine the consideration of who you are with the consideration of what you previously were? Why do I say *were*? You are still what you were. Why cease to regard what you have not ceased to be? What you have been, and what you are, is one and the same consideration; your new official character is a different matter. In the scrutiny of yourself the one should not exclude the other. For you are, as I have said, still what you were, and no less what you were than what you have since become, perhaps even more. In fact you were *that* by nature; *this* you have borrowed; you have been changed into it. The former is not thrown away, the latter is thrown in. Let us treat them both together; for, as I remember saying before, when they are compared one with the other they will both become more useful. When,

¹ Apoc. xvii. 15.

farther back, you were considering what you are, I told you to consider your nature as a man: for you were born a man. Moreover, if a person inquire who you personally are, the answer will be the name of the character you sustain, viz. a bishop, and this you have become: *that* you were not by birth. Now which of these seems to you to be absolutely your own, and above all else to belong to you? That which you have become, or that which you were born? Must we not say that which you were born? I therefore counsel you to mainly consider what you mainly are, that is to say, *a man*; such you were by birth.

18. Nor should you only observe *what* you were born, viz., a man, but also *what manner of man*, if you do not wish to be defrauded of the fruit and profit of your consideration. Away then with these hereditary girdles which have been accursed from the beginning. Tear to pieces the covering of leaves that conceal the shame but do not cure the wound. Strip off the disguise of this fleeting honour, and the tinsel of this sham glory, so that you may consider yourself in your bare nakedness, for naked you came out of your mother's womb.¹ Did you then wear the sacred fillet? Had you then the glittering gems about your person? Were you robed in flowery silks? Did the plumes then wave upon your head? Were you decked with gold and silver? If you scatter all this like morning clouds quickly passing by and soon to altogether pass away, if you blow them from before the face of your consideration, you will behold a man naked, poor, wretched, pitiable; a man grieving that he is a man, blushing at his nakedness, weeping that he is born, complaining that he is a man born to toil, not to honour,² born of a woman and thereby a guilty creature,³ living but a little while and therefore in constant

¹ Job i. 21.

² Ibid. v. 7.

³ Ibid. xiv. 1.

fear, full of misery and therefore ever bathed in tears. And, truly, miseries abound, for they are those of body and soul together. How can he escape calamity who is born in sin, with a frail body and a barren mind? Of a truth he must be full of misery, who through transmitted corruption, the sentence of death, bears the double load of weakness of body and foolishness of heart. It will do you good to unite these two considerations. While you think of yourself as supreme pontiff, bear in mind as well that you not only were, but are, worthless ashes. In your thinking, imitate nature; and, which is worthier of you, imitate the Author of nature, by associating the highest and the lowest things. Has not nature in the person of man bound together poor clay and the breath of life? Has not the Author of nature in His own Person tempered together the Word and clay? Take then for your pattern both our original constitution and the mystery of our redemption, in order that, though you sit on high, you may not be high-minded, but may think lowly of yourself, and condescend to men of low degree.

CHAPTER X

What manner of man the Pope is

19. Accordingly, if you consider how great you are, think also, and above all, what manner of man you are. This consideration keeps you well within yourself¹; it suffers you not to fly from yourself, nor to walk in great matters, or in things too wonderful for you.² Take your stand within yourself; you will not then sink beneath your level, nor rise above it,

¹ See above.

² Ps. cxxxi. 1. R. V. Margin.

you will not go too far, nor spread out too wide. Keep to the middle if you wish to keep moderation. The mid way is the safe way. Moderation abides in the mean, and moderation is virtue. Every abiding place outside the bounds of moderation is only exile to the wise man. Wherefore, he will not dwell in the length, that is, beyond moderation; nor even in the breadth, that is, outside it; nor, again, in the height, or in the depth, one of which is above moderation, the other beneath it. In fact 'length' mostly implies going beyond bounds; 'breadth' may mean a rent, 'height' a fall, and 'depth' an abyss. I say these things the more plainly that you may not think I am repeating the apostle's exhortation to comprehend with all saints the length, and breadth, and height, and depth.¹ This belongs to another sort of discussion, and a different occasion. Just now by 'length' I mean a man's promising himself a long life; by 'breadth', his being racked with superfluous cares; by 'height', his trusting too much in himself; by 'depth', his being unduly depressed. Well then, if a man measures out for himself distant times, is he not really starting to go too far? Is he not in his far-reaching anxiety passing the bounds of life? Thus it is that men, exiled from themselves in this present life through forgetfulness, are led by useless anxiety to migrate to distant ages, which will not profit, nay rather, may never be. Likewise, the heart which is spread over many things must of necessity be torn by many cares, and once it is too thin there comes a rent. Further, if a man have overweening confidence in himself, what is there for him but a headlong fall? For you have read what is written, 'Before a fall the heart is lifted up.'² And on the side of excessive timidity, what is depression but in a sense the loss of oneself in despair? A brave

¹ Eph. iii. 18.² Prov. xviii. 12.

man will not be so far depressed. A prudent man will not be misled by the uncertainty of a long life. A modest man will moderate his cares ; he will refrain from superfluities, and will not deny himself what is necessary. A righteous man, moreover, will not venture on what is above him, but will say with righteous Job, ‘ If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.’¹

CHAPTER XI

The necessity for self-examination

20. Let me beg you, then, in this consideration of yourself to walk with caution. Let perfect equity be your companion, so that you may not allow yourself more than is due, nor deprive yourself of more than is right. Now you fall into the first of these errors not only by claiming goodness which you have not, but also by taking credit for goodness which you have. Carefully distinguish how far you are what you are through your own efforts, and how far through the gift of God, and let there be no deceit in your spirit. Deceit there will be unless you faithfully separate what belongs to yourself, and honestly surrender to God the things which are God’s. I do not doubt that you are fully convinced that what is evil in you comes from yourself, your goodness from the Lord. Certainly while we consider what manner of man you are, we must also recall to memory the sort of man you were ; we must compare the end with the beginning. We must see whether you have advanced in virtue, in wisdom, in understanding, in sweetness of character, or whether, which God forbid ! you have fallen away. We must note whether you

¹ Job x. 15.

are more patient or more impatient than you were wont to be ; more prone to wrath, or more gentle ; more insolent, or more humble ; more affable, or more austere ; more easily entreated, or more obstinate ; more pusillanimous, or more magnanimous ; more earnest, or somewhat more careless ; more filled with the fear of God, or, it may be, more confident than you ought to be. What a wide field lies before you in this kind of consideration ! I therefore mention a few points, indicating, as it were, some seed plots, though I am not myself the sower, but only the giver of seed to the sower. You should have a clear idea of your zeal, your clemency, and also your discretion, which is the regulator of both those virtues ; you should see what you are like in forgiving injuries and in avenging them ; how far on both sides you prudently regard degree, place, and time. In the practice of these three virtues these three things must be thoroughly considered, lest if the conditions be not satisfied the ‘virtues’ cease to be virtues ; for there is nothing in their nature to make them virtues ; they are such only by the right practice of them. They themselves tell us that they are ‘indifferent’. It is possible for you, either by abusing them, or by confounding them with one another, to turn them into vices ; on the other hand you may by the good and methodical use of them make them virtues. When the eye of discretion is darkened, they are wont to jump to conclusions and occupy their own stand-points. Now there are two causes of this dim sight—anger and excessive tenderness. The rebuke of judgement is enfeebled by the latter, precipitated by the former. Must not a pious clemency be endangered on the one side, or a righteous zeal on the other ? The eye that is disordered through anger views nothing in the light of clemency ; the eye bedewed with tears of womanly tenderness does not see straight. You

will not be innocent if you either punish him to whom, it may be, mercy should be shown, or spare him who ought to have been punished.

CHAPTER XII

The spiritual effects of prosperity and adversity

21. And I would not have you disguise the manner of man you have found yourself in tribulations. If you have found yourself steadfast in your own, sympathetic in other men's, rejoice. Here you have evidence of an upright heart. On the contrary, if perchance you are found to be impatient in your own trials, and are nevertheless seen to be by no means compassionate in other men's, this is a mark of a heart full of perversity. How has it been with you in prosperity? Is there nothing to call for consideration? Of course there is, if you carefully observe how seldom you find a man who does not, at least to some extent, in time of prosperity relax his vigilance and self-discipline. As regards discipline, when was not prosperity to the unwary what fire is to wax, or the rays of the sun to snow and ice? David was wise, Solomon wiser; but, flattered by unlooked-for success, the one in part and the other altogether acted foolishly. He is a great man, who, when he falls into adversity, does not fall away at least a little from his wisdom; and he is as great who has been favoured with the smiles of Fortune without becoming the butt of her ridicule. And yet it is easier to find men who have kept their wisdom when fortune was against them, than it is to find men who have not lost it when fortune was on their side. He deserves our choice, and he

is a great man, who in the days of prosperity has at all events withstood the stealthy approaches of unbecoming laughter, or rudeness of speech ; who has not bestowed too much attention upon dress, or pampered the body.

CHAPTER XIII

*Idleness, trifling, and profitless conversation
to be shunned*

22. The wise man rightly admonishes us that if we are to write words of wisdom we must have leisure ;¹ still we must be on our guard even against leisure itself. We must accordingly shun idleness, the mother of trifles, the step-mother of virtues. With men of the world trifles are trifles ; in the mouth of a priest they are blasphemies. Yet, if sometimes they occur in conversation, we must perhaps put up with them ; reply to them in the same strain we never ought. Rather we ought cautiously and prudently to put a stop to trifling. We should do our best to break out into something serious to which the company would listen not only with profit, but with pleasure, and refrain from idle talk. You have consecrated your mouth to the Gospel ; to open it for such things is unlawful, to accustom it to them is sacrilege. ‘The lips of the priest,’ says one, ‘keep knowledge, and men look for the law from his mouth’ ;² certainly not trifles, or idle tales. It is not enough that buffoonery, which they glorify as wit and polish, be removed far from your mouth ; it ought also to be banished far from your ear. It is an

¹ Eccclus. xxxviii. 25.

² Mal. ii. 7.

abomination that you are moved to laughter, it is more abominable for you to move others. But whether it is more damnable to disparage a man, or listen to a disparager, I could not easily tell.

CHAPTER XIV

The Pope warned against accepting the person of any

23. I need not trouble you to look at avarice, for you are said to value money no more than chaff.¹ There is, assuredly, no reason to dread your judgements on that account. But there is a lurking danger which no less frequently, and no less banefully, besets the judgement seat; and as regards this, I should be very sorry if any mischief were latent in your conscience, and you were unaware of it. Do you ask to what I refer? The acceptance of men's persons. Consider
 ✓ yourself guilty of no small sin if you welcome sinners, and do not rather decide the causes of the deserving. There is also another vice; if you feel yourself to be free from it you will in my opinion sit in solitary state among all those whom I have known to occupy the chair, because you have really, in a singular measure, raised yourself above yourself as the prophet says.² I mean an easy credulity, a very crafty little

¹ This was very rare, the property of the Church being claimed entirely by the Popes of the Middle Ages. Innocent II asserted the 'feudal right' of the Roman Pontiff with much emphasis at the second Lateran Council (A.D. 1139). The Proctors of the Peers and Commons of England bitterly complained at the first Council of Lyons (A.D. 1245). See Hussey, *Rise of the Papal Power*, p. 189, &c.

² Lament. iii. 28. Vulg.

fox, against whose tricks, so far as I have ascertained, not one of our great men has taken adequate precaution. That was why they were so often angry, all for nothing ; that was why they frequently abandoned the innocent, and delivered premature judgements against men who were not in court. But I congratulate you (and I am not afraid that you will brand me as a flatterer), I congratulate you, I say, on having hitherto presided without much complaint about any of these things ; whether you are also free from fault, see for yourself. Now your consideration must be directed to those things which are below you. But here we start afresh ; for, bearing in mind your many occupations, the shorter the discourse the better.

BOOK III

[‘In the third Book St. Bernard treats of the consideration the Pope ought to have towards those that are under him, and they are the faithful throughout the world. *There is no poison or arms that he ought to dread more than the spirit of tyranny.* He next deals with the Pope’s duty towards those not in the Church. He then protests against the abuse of Appeals to Rome, afterwards condemns the like abuse of Exemptions, discusses Dispensations, and concludes by urging Eugenius to see that strict discipline is maintained, and that ecclesiastical institutions are respected. He recommends him more particularly to enforce the reforms enjoined at the Council of Rheims relating to the dress and manners of the clergy, as also those respecting the age and qualifications of such as were to be admitted to benefices’ (*Du Pin*).

Appeals. The Sardican Canon (A.D. 347) gave the Pope power to receive appeals. Pope Nicholas (A.D. 867) asserted that no question in the Church could be decided without the consent of the Roman Pontiff. Gregory VII went further in holding that Councils and Canons derive their force from the authority of Rome. Thither, accordingly, every ecclesiastical cause was to be carried for final determination. All Europe, and England especially, cried out against the grievous burden for centuries (Hussey, *Rise of the Papal Power*). The system, as St. Bernard knew it, was ‘an elaborate fabric built up by the Canon Law of times subsequent to Charlemagne upon the basis of the False Decretals. It was a grand innovation whereby in the West the entire system of purely ecclesiastical appeals (and indeed of justice) was in effect perverted and frustrated, viz. the right gradually allowed of appealing immediately from any ecclesiastical tribunal, high or low, upon any subject, great or small, to the Pope at once’ (*Dict. of Christ. Antiq.*). St. Bernard’s Letters, 178, 179, 180, refer to a case in point.

Exemptions. ‘In the earlier stages of their existence, monasteries generally availed themselves gladly of the patronage of the bishop of the diocese. But as they increased in wealth and power, they struggled to emancipate themselves from his control. . . . Instances might easily be multiplied of the almost continual collision in Western Christendom between the bishops and the monasteries in their dioceses; in which the monasteries, almost invariably, had the support of the pope, and, frequently, of the royal authority’ (*Dict. of Christ. Antiq.*). Sometimes a bishop, unless by invitation of the abbot or abbess, could not consecrate an altar, or even by invitation enter the more private parts of a convent. Nor could he hinder an appeal to Rome. On the other hand, it must in justice be stated that the oppressive conduct of the bishops necessitated some refuge from their arbitrary jurisdiction. ‘The grossness of the tyranny practised by some bishops may be inferred from the fact that the monastic bodies often appealed against it in synods, and that these, although composed of bishops, felt themselves obliged to condemn it in strong terms and to forbid its continuance’ (Robertson, *Ch. Hist., Second Period*, Bk. I, ch. ix, p. 202).

Monastic life. Church’s *Life of Anselm*, ch. iii, on ‘The Discipline of a Norman Monastery’, may be profitably consulted; also Morison’s *St. Bernard*, pp. 16 sq., 126–33. The Cistercian order, to which St. Bernard belonged, was founded A.D. 1098 by Robert, son of a nobleman in Champagne. ‘His successor at Citeaux, Alberic, laid down the rule for the new order, and it was afterwards carried out with greater rigour by the third abbot, Stephen Harding, an Englishman, and one of Robert’s original companions, whose code, entitled the “Charter of Love”, was sanctioned by Pope Calixtus in A.D. 1119. The Cistercians were to observe the rule of St. Benedict, without any glosses or relaxations. Their dress was to be white, agreeably to a pattern which the Blessed Virgin had shown to Alberic in a vision. They were to accept no gifts of churches, altars, or tithes. From the ides of September to Easter they were to eat but one meal daily. Their monasteries were to be planted in lonely places; they were to eschew all pomp, pride, and superfluity; their services were to be

simple and plain; some of the ecclesiastical vestments were discarded, and those which were retained were to be of fustian or linen, without any golden ornaments. They were to have only one iron chandelier; their censers were to be of brass or iron; no plate was allowed, except one chalice and a tube for the eucharistic wine, and these were, if possible, to be of silver gilt, but not of gold. The monks were to give themselves wholly to spiritual employments, while the secular affairs of the community were to be managed by the 'bearded' or lay brethren. No serfs were allowed, but hired servants were employed to assist in labour. In the simplicity of their church services and furniture, the Cistercians differed from the Cluniacs, whose ritual was distinguished for its splendour; the elder order regarded the principles of the younger as a reproach to itself, and a rivalry soon sprang up between them. The white dress, which, although already adopted at Camaldoli, was a novelty in France, gave offence to the other monastic societies, who had worn black habits as a symbol of humility, and regarded the new colour as a pretension to superior righteousness; but the Cistercians defended it as an expression of the joy which became the angelic life of the cloister' (Robertson, p. 706; Fleury, *Hist. Ecc.*, Bk. LXVII, c. 48). St. Bernard is said to have founded some 160 monasteries; at the general chapter in A.D. 1151 there were 500; in the following century the number had increased to 1,800, and eventually became much greater. The order grew rich, and reforms were necessary, but until the rise of the Mendicants they were the most popular of all the monastic societies.

Council of Rheims (1148). The chief canons related to non-residence; chaplains accepting posts without permission of the bishop, and taking the oath of canonical obedience; the arrest, &c., of the clergy; the avoidance by the bishops and clergy of coloured garments, divided skirts, and superfluous ornaments; marriages of 'religious'; appropriation of tithes by the laity; putting benefices into 'commission', and the appointment of a particular priest to each benefice with adequate maintenance; penance for incendiaries; the treatment of Manichean heretics (Fleury, *Hist. Ecc.*, Bk. LXIX, c. 31.)]

CHAPTER I

The Pope should aim not at subjecting all men to himself, but at bringing them into the bosom of the Church

1. The end of the previous book suggests the beginning of this. And so, according to my promise, we must consider the things that are under you. You cannot think it necessary to ask me what they are, Eugenius, best of priests; it were better perhaps to ask what they are not. If a man wishes to discover what does belong to your charge, he must go out of the world. Your progenitors were destined to vanquish the whole world, not certain portions of it. 'Go ye into all the world'¹ was the command given to them. They indeed sold their garments and bought swords, fiery eloquence, and an ardent spirit, weapons powerful in the sight of God. Whither did not those illustrious conquerors come, those sons of the mighty?² Whither did they not send their sharp arrows with hot scorching coals?³ Indeed their sound went forth into all the earth and their words to the ends of the world.⁴ Those words of flaming fire which the Lord sent

¹ St. Mark xvi. 15.

² Ps. cxxvii. 4. The Hebrew has 'sons of the youth', or 'sons of one's youth', which the Septuagint translators misunderstanding rendered *fili excussorum*. The Vulgate perpetuated the blunder. St. Jerome (*Letter to Marcella on the Exposition of the Psalm*)—I thank the Bishop of Gloucester for the reference—in an interesting discussion of the passage negatives the view that the apostles could be called *excussi*; inasmuch, he says, as they shook off the dust of their feet they would more fitly be called *excutientes*. In ordinary speech, St. Jerome adds, *excussi* was regarded as the equivalent of *vegeti, robusti, expediti*.

³ Ps. cxx. 4.

⁴ Ps. xix. 4.

into the earth made men's hearts glow in their inmost depths. Those indefatigable warriors fell on the field of battle, but they fell unconquered : even in death they triumphed. Their sovereignty was established beyond measure :¹ they were made princes in all lands.² You have succeeded to their inheritance. So you are their heir, and the world is your inheritance. But the exact nature of your interest and theirs in this heritage is a matter for sober and careful consideration. For I do not think you have inherited the world absolutely, but with certain limitations ; as it seems to me you have been entrusted with a stewardship over it, not put in possession of it. If you go on to usurp possession, He withstands you who says ' Mine is the world and the fulness thereof'.³ You are not the King of whom the prophet speaks—' And all the earth shall be His possession'.⁴ He means Christ, who claims possession both by right of creation, and by the merits of redemption, and by the gift of the Father. For to whom else has it been said, ' Ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for thine inheritance, and the utmost bounds of the earth for thy possession' ?⁵ Surrender possession and dominion to Him ; keep for yourself the care thereof. This is your share : put not forth your hand beyond it.

2. ' What ?' you say, ' You grant me precedence : do you prohibit sovereignty ?' Most certainly. You speak as if pre-eminence in watchful care were not good pre-eminence. Is not the farm in the care of the steward, and the child, though he be master, subject to the tutor ? Nevertheless, the steward does not own the farm, nor is the tutor master of his master. I would have you also so take precedence that you may provide, counsel, administer, serve. Let your precedence be

¹ Ps. cxxxix. 17. Vulg.

² Ps. xlv. 16.

³ Ps l. 12.

⁴ Ps. civ. 24.

⁵ Ps. ii. 8.

profitable to others ;¹ take precedence like a faithful and wise servant 'whom his Lord hath set over his household'.² For what purpose? That you may 'give them food in due season'; in other words, may manage, not command. Do this; and inasmuch as you too are a man, do not aim at lording it over other men, lest all unrighteousness gain dominion over you.³ But I have already pressed this upon you more than enough in discussing who you are. Yet I add this much; for I dread no poison for you, no sword more than the lust of dominion. If you are not greatly deceived, you surely think you have received no more from the great apostle than I have said; to claim this is to take much upon yourself. Recall the words of him who said 'I am a debtor both to the wise and to the foolish'.⁴ And if your judgement tells you that the admonition is superfluous, please remember also that the offensive name of 'debtor' suits a servant better than a master. The servant in the Gospel was asked 'How much owest thou unto my Lord?'⁵ So then, if you acknowledge that you are not lord over the wise and the foolish, but a debtor to them, you must be exceedingly careful, and must with unceasing vigilance consider how those who lack wisdom may become wise, how the wise may be prevented from turning to folly, how those who have turned to folly may recover their senses. But no sort of folly, so to speak, is more foolish than unbelief. So then you are a debtor also to the unbelieving, both Jews and Gentiles.

3. We perceive then that you must strive to the utmost that they who have not faith may be turned to faith, that they who have turned may not turn aside, that they who have thus

¹ *Praeſis, ut proſis*—'As you are before the rest, so be for them.'

² St. Matt. xxiv. 45.

³ Ps. cxix. 133.

⁴ Rom. i. 14.

⁵ St. Luke xvi. 5.

turned may turn back ; moreover, you must see that the perverse ones be set in the paths of uprightness, and the subverted recalled to truth ; that the subverters of men's souls may be convinced by invincible reason, so that they themselves, if possible, may either be cured of their errors, or, if that may not be, they may lose their authority, and the power of subverting other men. You must certainly not allow yourself to be imposed upon by the worst sort of foolish men, I mean heretics and schismatics ; for these are they who are subverted, and subvert ; they are dogs to tear, foxes to deceive. Men, I say, of this sort must be corrected with special care lest they perish, or must be restrained that they may not do damage. As regards the Jews, I grant time may be your excuse ; they have their fixed limit, which cannot be anticipated. The fullness of the Gentiles must first come in. But as regards the Gentiles themselves, what answer do you make ? Nay rather, what is the verdict of your consideration on this long delay ? Why did the fathers resolve to set bounds to the Gospel, and to check the word of faith, while men's hearts are hardening in unbelief ? Why, do we suppose, the word running very swiftly suddenly stopped ?¹ Who was the first to forbid its life-giving progress ? Some unknown cause perhaps hindered them ; perhaps necessity compelled them.

4. Our pretences will not bear examination. Can we with confidence and a good conscience refrain from even offering Christ to those who have Him not ? Do we hold back the truth of God in unrighteousness ? The fullness of the Gentiles must certainly come some day. Are we waiting for the faith to fall from heaven upon them ? Who ever believed by accident ? How shall they believe without a preacher ?²

¹ Ps. cxlvii. 15.

² Rom. x. 14.

Peter was sent to Cornelius,¹ Philip to the Eunuch;² and if we seek a more modern instance, Augustine was appointed by Gregory of blessed memory to deliver the mould of faith to the English.³ Look at things from this point of view. A word more about the obstinacy of the Greeks who are with us, and yet are not with us; united by the bond of faith, and yet not on terms of peace.⁴ Though, to speak accurately, they have in the matter of faith itself halted and wandered from the right paths. So also respecting heresy, which is quietly creeping in almost everywhere; in some cases is openly raging. For on all sides, and in public too, it is eager to swallow the Church's little ones.⁵ Do you ask where? Your

¹ Acts x. 20. ² Acts viii. 26. ³ Bright, *Early Eng. Ch. Hist.*, ch. ii.

⁴ St. Bernard probably refers particularly to the dispute respecting the Procession of the Holy Ghost, which 'for nearly a thousand years seemed to the contending parties to be of such importance as to justify the rent between East and West'. 'The Council of Constantinople (A. D. 381) had inserted in the Creed of the Council of Nice (A. D. 325) the words, "proceeding from the Father"; and the Council of Ephesus (A. D. 431) had decreed that no addition should be made to that Creed henceforth. Accordingly, the Greek fathers uniformly declared their belief in the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father. The Latin fathers, on the other hand, having regard to those passages of Scripture which speak of the Spirit of Christ, and of the Spirit as sent by the Son, continually spoke of the Holy Ghost as proceeding from the Father and the Son.' In spite of the decree of the Council of Ephesus the Churches of France and Spain did add to the Creed of Constantinople the words 'and the Son'. The contest was renewed at intervals with mutual excommunications, and thus in the eleventh century arose the schism which has never since been healed. The reconciliation attempted at the Council of Florence (A. D. 1442) was only superficial, and was repudiated by the Greeks. Stanley, *Eastern Church*; Robertson, *Ch. Hist.*; Harold Browne, *Thirty-Nine Articles*; Mosheim, *Cent. XV*, &c.

⁵ The heresy which St. Bernard has in mind is apparently that of the Henricians, so called after their founder, Henry, an Italian monk, hermit, and ardent reformer. St. Bernard's influence proved too great for him

own officials who often visit the South know where these heretics are, and can tell you. They go to and fro in their midst, or right through them, but what good they have so far done we have yet to learn. We might perhaps have heard of some good if the salvation of the people of Spain had not been as nought in comparison with gold. It is your duty to provide a remedy for this scourge also.

5. But there is a species of folly which has already nearly stultified the wisdom of faith itself. It is incredible to what an extent this venom has infected almost the whole Catholic Church. For while we are all of us seeking our own therein, it happens that envying one another, provoking one another, we are harassed till we hate one another, and are moved to do wrong; we arm ourselves for legal strife, quibble and sophisticate, rush into slanderous accusations, burst into maledictions, are oppressed by those who are stronger than ourselves, and in our turn oppress those who are weaker. How worthy and laudable an occupation for the meditation of your heart to discover some antidote for this deadly sort of folly, which you contemplate in possession of the very body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people! O ambition! the cross of the ambitious, how is it that though you torture all, you please all? Nothing causes more excruciating torment, or more vexing disquietude; and yet nothing creates more bustle and stir among mortal men than its affairs. Is it not true that the thresholds of the apostles are worn

even at Toulouse, where his mission was highly popular. At the Council of Rheims (A.D. 1148) he was condemned by Eugenius III and committed to prison. There he died not long after. He rejected the baptism of infants, severely censured the corrupt and licentious manners of the clergy, treated the festivals and ceremonies of the Church with the utmost contempt, and held clandestine assemblies in which he explained and inculcated the novelties he taught. See Mosheim, *Cent. XII.*

more by the footsteps of ambition than by those of devotion? Does not your palace all day long re-echo the tones of its voice? Is not the enriching of ambition the object of the whole toiling practice of the laws and canons? Is not all Italy a yawning gulf of insatiable avarice and rapacity for the spoils it offers? What is it, or rather what else is it, that, I will not even say cuts *into*, but cuts *off* your own spiritual pursuits? How often has this restless and disquieting mischief caused your holy and faithful leisure to miscarry! It is one thing for the oppressed to appeal to you; it is quite another for ecclesiastical ambition to make a tool of you by seating itself on the throne. You should not fail the former, nor in the least give way to the latter. Yet how iniquitously ambition is fostered, while the oppressed are scorned! Nevertheless you are a debtor to both, to the oppressed that you may lift them up, to the ambitious that you may put them down.

CHAPTER II

The limits of appeals to the Apostolic See

6. And as we have come upon the question of appeals, it will not be irrelevant to pursue the subject somewhat farther. For the conduct of them a deeply religious insight is required, so that what was intended to meet a great need may not be rendered useless through abuse. It seems to me that they may even be productive of much mischief if they are not employed with the utmost moderation. Men appeal to you from all over the world. It is a proof of your singular primacy. But if you are wise you will rejoice not in your primacy, but in its fruitfulness. The apostles were told not to rejoice in the spirits being subject to them.¹ Men appeal

¹ St. Luke x. 20.

to you, as I have said, and I would the resulting benefit were equal to the necessity. Would that when the oppressed cries the oppressor might have reason to know it! Would that the wicked in his pride did not consume the poor! What so fitting as for the oppressed to call upon your name and find a refuge, but that the crafty should not escape? What on the other hand is so perverse, so unfair, as that the wrongdoer should rejoice, and he who has suffered wrong should be harassed for nothing? You sadly lack humanity if you are not drawn towards a man whose heart is full of grief through the wrong which has been done him, the toilsome journey, and the expenses which he has incurred. But there is a no less sad lack of spirit if you are not roused against him who is partly the direct, partly the indirect, cause of so many calamities. Rouse thee, man of God, when these things happen; let both your pity and your indignation be stirred. The one you owe to the injured, the other to him who inflicts the injury. Let the former be consoled for his losses, by satisfaction for his wrongs, by putting a stop to the malicious charges; let the latter be so handled that he may be sorry for having done what he was not afraid to do, and may not laugh at the punishment of the innocent.

7. I think he ought no less to suffer who has appealed without cause. You have the rule of justice based on the fixed principles of divine equity, and, unless I am mistaken, also enjoined by the very law regulating appeals. This provides that an unlawful appeal must not benefit the appellant, nor prejudice the defendant. Why should a man be harassed for nothing? It is perfectly just that he who wished to injure his neighbour should instead injure himself. To unjustly appeal is to do injustice; to unjustly appeal and escape scot-free only lights the fire of unjust appeals. Now every appeal

is unjust which is not necessitated by the failure of justice. An appeal is lawful only when you are wronged ; it is not a means of wronging some one else. The appeal must be from a judicial sentence. To anticipate the sentence by an appeal unless some wrong was clearly going to be done, admits of no justification. He therefore who appeals when no such wrong threatens, obviously purposes wrong to another man, or to gain time. An appeal is not a subterfuge, but a refuge. How many have we known to appeal after defeat only that while the appeal was pending they might without let of law indulge in what is never lawful ! The permission to appeal has in some cases, we know, left men unmolested for the whole of their lives in the commission of execrable crimes, incest, for example, or adultery. How comes this about, that what ought to be the terror of villains is found protecting villainy ? How long will you pretend not to notice, or will really not heed, the murmurs of the whole earth ? How long do you mean to sleep ? How long will it be before your consideration awakes to this gigantic confusing and abusing of appeals ? They are contrary to laws human and divine, contrary to custom and established order. There is no distinction of place, degree, time, cause, or person. These frivolous, and, in most cases, useless anticipatory appeals come from all sides. Was not the Court of Appeal wont to be the special terror of malicious offenders ? At the present time with its assistance they are themselves a terror, and that to good men. The antidote is turned to poison. The change is not the work of the right hand of the Most High.

8. Good men have appeals brought against them by the bad to prevent their doing good, and in terror at the voice of your thunder they forbear. Even bishops are appealed against that they may not dare to dissolve unlawful marriages, or prohibit

them. They are appealed against that they may not presume to punish in the least degree, or check rapine, theft, sacrilege, and crime of that description. They are appealed against that they may be powerless to close the sacred offices against unworthy or infamous persons, or deprive them when admitted. What remedy are you seeking to discover for this disease, so that what was devised as a remedy be not found unto death? The Lord was zealous for the house of prayer when it was made a den of robbers¹; do you, his minister, disguise the fact that the refuge of the wretched has been made an arsenal of iniquity? On all sides you may see the oppressed forestalled, and those who are eager to appeal are not the wronged, but those who wish to do wrong. Here is a mystery. What is the explanation? It is for you to consider, not for me to study the matter. And do you ask why the victims of these appeals do not come to prove their innocence, and show the malice of their opponents? I will tell you what the usual answer is—‘We don’t care to be troubled for nothing. In the court there are men too ready to favour the appellants and foster appeals. If we are to give way at Rome, it is better to give way at home.’

9. I confess that I partly believe this. In this vast number of appeals, which are of daily occurrence, can you show me an appellant who has even repaid the travelling expenses of the defendant? It would be passing strange if all the appellants were, as this implies, after your investigation, found to be in the right, and those appealed against in the wrong. ‘Love righteousness’, saith the Scripture, ‘ye that be judges of the earth.’² It is a small thing to keep righteousness, unless you love it as well. They who keep it do no more; they who love it are zealous for it. A lover of righteousness inquires

¹ St. Matt. xxi. 13.

² Wisd. of Sol. i. 1.

for righteousness, and follows after it ; he, moreover, follows up all unrighteousness. You have nothing in common with those men who think appeals good sport. I am ashamed to quote the saying which among the heathen has become a proverb—‘We have roused two fat stags.’ To speak more gently, there is more wit than justice in this. Do you, if you love righteousness, not encourage appeals, but tolerate them. Still, it is but little that the Churches of God gain through the righteousness of a single individual when the prevalent views are those of men differently disposed. That, however, will be discussed elsewhere, when we begin to deal with the things around you.

10. Now do not think it a waste of time to find leisure for considering how you may restore appeals, if possible, to their lawful use. If you hereupon inquire, or rather care to know, what I think, I say that as appeals are not to be despised, so neither are they to be at all unlawfully used. And I should find it hard to say which of these, in my opinion, indicates the greater insolence, were it not that it seems as though the unlawful use must of necessity induce some measure of contempt, and for this reason, because it is more injurious, it ought perhaps to be more vigorously followed up. Is it not really more injurious, bad in itself, bad in its offspring ? Is it not this unlawful use which either weakens the authority of the very law of nature, or nullifies it altogether ? Can a man receive anything better than the sacraments ? If, however, they are wrongfully used by the unworthy, or are unworthily handled, they are by no means received. They bring the greater damnation, because they are not duly revered. I allow that appeals are a great blessing to the world at large, as necessary as the sun itself to mortal men. In fact they are as it were a sun of righteousness, bringing to light and

convicting the works of darkness. They are by all means to be cherished and upheld, but only those which are demanded of necessity, not those devised by craft and cunning. All unlawful appeals are of this description; they do not help in time of need, they only minister to iniquity. They could not fail to become contemptible. How many defendants have in answer to such appeals even abandoned their rights that they might not be worn out by a long and fruitless journey? Yet there have been more who, unable to endure the loss of their own, have shown but scant respect for these unsuitable appeals and for personages bearing great names.

II. Let me tell of a case in point. A certain man had publicly betrothed his future wife. The solemn day of marriage had arrived. All things were ready; many guests were invited; when lo! a man who coveted his neighbour's wife all at once announced his intention of appealing, on the ground that the lady had been first given to him and ought to belong to him. The bridegroom was thunderstruck; there was a dead-lock; the priest did not dare to proceed; all the preparations were thrown away; everybody went off to eat his supper at home; the bride was barred from bed and board until after the return journey from Rome. This befell a resident in Paris, a noble city of Gaul and the home of royalty. On another occasion, in the same city, a certain man became engaged and fixed the day for the wedding. Meanwhile a false report got abroad that the parties ought not to be united. The case was referred to the judgement of the Church, but without the least expectation of a decision on the appeal. There was no case, no allegation. The only object in view was to delay and frustrate the marriage. But the bridegroom, whether it was that he did not choose to make his preparations for nothing, or that he would not brook the disap-

pointment and be so long kept from the woman he loved, either treated the appeal with contempt, or feigned ignorance of it, and went through with what he had purposed. To take a recent case, what are we to say of the extraordinary presumption of a certain young man belonging to the church at Auxerre? The holy bishop having died, the clergy, according to custom, wished to elect another; but the young man in question intervened with an appeal, and forbade anything to be done until after his return from Rome; and yet to that very appeal he laid no information. For when he saw that he was treated with contempt for appealing unreasonably, he called together such friends as he could three days after the others had made their choice, and got himself elected.

12. It is clear from these and countless other instances that the unlawful use of appeals does not arise from the contempt for them, but that the contempt of them springs from the unlawful use. See, therefore, why it is that your zeal and energy almost constantly vindicate the contempt, and throw a veil over the unlawful use. Do you wish to more completely bridle contempt? Take care that the infant growth is strangled in the very womb of its abandoned mother. And this will be done if the unlawful use meets with suitable punishment. Stop the unlawful use, and there will be no excuse for contempt. Further, when there is no excuse, audacity will be hissed off the stage. Let there be, then, no usurper of the privilege, and there will be no despiser, or very seldom. You do well in refusing to sanction such appeals, or countenance the trickery, and in leaving much of the business to those who are familiar with the details, or can quickly become so. For the easier investigation is made, and the more certain its results, the sooner will the decision be given, and the sounder will it be. What gracious condescension it is in

you to thus spare so many men enormous trouble and expense ! But you must take particular care in selecting those whom you trust so much. I might add many useful hints on the same subject ; but I am mindful of my purpose, and, content with giving you an opportunity of making the addition, I pass to other things.

CHAPTER III

Church rulers are for the profit of their people

13. And I suppose I must certainly not pass over the first thing that occurs to me. You are at the head of affairs, without a rival. Why are you thus placed ? The question, I tell you, requires consideration. Is it that you may become great through those beneath you ? By no means, but that you may make them great. They have chosen you chief, but for their own sake, not for yours. If it is not so, can you reckon yourself above the very persons for whose favours you are a candidate ? Listen to the Lord's words, ' They who have authority over them are called benefactors.'¹ That, however, relates to them that are without. What has it to do with us ? You are falsely so called if you aim not so much at being a benefactor as at ruling your benefactor. A man shows a poor spirit when he seeks not the welfare of those beneath him, but to make his own profit out of them. Such conduct is specially discreditable in a commander-in-chief. How beautifully did the Master of the Gentiles express his opinion that parents ought to lay up for the children, not children for the parents.² He several times says, and it is a glorious saying, ' Not that I seek a gift, but fruit.'³ But now

¹ St. Luke xxii. 25.

² 2 Cor. xii. 14

³ Phil. iv. 17.

let us pass on, lest some one find my lingering here an indication of avarice in you ; though how far you are removed from that vice I testified in a former book. For I know what tempting offers you have refused, and how deep your poverty was when you refused them. If, then, I write such things to you, it is not that *you* require the admonition. Surely what is written for your profit ought not to profit you only. I am here censuring avarice, a vice from which your character is safe enough ; whether the censure is necessary is for you to decide. I will say, however, not to mention the offerings of the poor, which you cannot bear to touch, that we have seen the German money-bags dwindling down ; the bags were not smaller, but the price paid was less. Silver was counted as hay. The Sagmarii reluctantly went home with their bundles as heavy as when they came. A new thing ! Was Rome ever known to refuse gold ? Even now we do not believe such practice commends itself to the Romans. Two men came to Rome, both wealthy, both culprits. One belonged to Mayence, the other to Cologne. Favour was freely shown to one ; the other, unworthy, I suppose, of any favour, was told, ‘The same robe you wore when you came in you will wear when you go out.’ What a glorious saying ! The very words of apostolic freedom. Was it one whit inferior to Peter’s, ‘Thy money perish with thee’?¹ The only difference is that the latter has more zeal, the former more modesty. What did the man get by coming from over sea, almost from the ends of the earth, crossing sea and land to purchase a bishopric twice over, once with his own money, once with other men’s ? For he had already bought it once. He brought much with him, but he took it back ; not all, however. The poor wretch fell into other hands than yours,

¹ Acts viii. 20.

more mighty to receive than to give. You did well to keep your hands clean both ways; you would not lay them on the head of an ambitious man, nor lay them under the unrighteous mammon. You did not thus hold aloof from a poor bishop, whom I could name, but you gave him something to give, so that he mighty not be called stingy; he secretly received from you what he openly gave. You thus with your own purse shielded the man from exposure; and at the same time by humouring the court, he (thanks to your kindness) escaped the dislike of those who love gifts. You cannot hide the deed; we know both the facts and the person. Does the story displease you? The more averse you are to hearing it, the greater pleasure I have in telling it. If it is good for you one way, it is good for me another. Where the glory of Christ is concerned I am under no such obligation to silence, as you are to refrain from seeking your own glory. And if you go on complaining, I will answer you out of the Gospel, 'The more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it, saying, he hath done all things well.'¹

CHAPTER IV

*Ecclesiastical rank and dignity to be respected.
The abuse of privileges and exemptions.*

14. There is something else—if it be something else, for it might perhaps be said to be part of the same subject—and let your consideration give good heed to it. He does not appear to be far from the truth who thought that what I am about to speak of should be classed as a variety of avarice. For my-

¹ St. Mark vii. 36.

self, I would not deny either that it is a kind of avarice, or that it looks like avarice. At all events if you aim at perfection you should shun not only things bad in themselves, but things that have the appearance of evil. In the one case you have regard to your conscience, in the other to your reputation. A particular line of conduct under different circumstances may be lawful ; nevertheless, if it does not look well, deem it unlawful. In a word, ask your ancestors, and they will answer, ‘Abstain from every appearance of evil.’¹ Let the Lord’s servant by all means imitate his Lord, for He Himself says, ‘If any man serve me, let him follow me.’² And concerning Him you know it is said, ‘The Lord hath reigned, he hath put on beauteous apparel, he hath clothed himself with strength.’³ Be you also strong in faith, beauteous in glory, and you have shown yourself an imitator of God. Your strength is the confidence of a faithful conscience, your beauty is the splendour of a good character. So then, I beseech you, be clothed with strength, for your strength is the joy of the Lord. Moreover, He delights in your fair beauty no less, as it were, than in His own likeness. Put on your glorious vestments ; be clothed with the two robes wherewith the virtuous⁴ woman was wont to clothe her household. Let there not be in your conscience a trace of a weak and feeble faith : let there not be in your reputation the blemish of a bad appearance. You will then wear the two robes, and the Bridegroom will rejoice over your soul which He has betrothed to Himself ; your God will joy over you. Are you wondering what my drift is, and do you not yet perceive my meaning ? I will not keep you in suspense any longer. I refer to the murmuring and complaining of the

¹ 1 Thess. v. 22.² St. John xii. 26.³ Ps. xciii. 1.⁴ Vulg. *fortis*, Prov. xxxi. 10.

Churches. They cry aloud that they are being mutilated and dismembered. There are none, or very few, which are not either already smarting under the scourge, or dreading its approach. Do you ask how that is? Abbots are exempted from their bishops, bishops from archbishops, archbishops from patriarchs or primates. Does this look well? I should be surprised if any justification could be found for such doings. The constant practice shows that you have authority, but possibly not so keen a sense of justice. You do this because you have the power, but whether you have the right is open to question. You are where you are that you may uphold the gradations of honour and dignity, secure to every one his proper rank, and not grudge any one his due; as one of your predecessors says, 'Honour to whom honour.'¹

15. The spiritual man of whom we read, who judges all things that he may be judged by no man,² will preface all his work with a sort of threefold consideration. First, he will ask whether the thing is lawful; then, is it becoming; lastly, whether it is also expedient. For although Christian philosophy undoubtedly inculcates that nothing is becoming unless it be lawful, and nothing expedient unless it be both becoming and lawful, it will not of necessity follow that everything lawful is either becoming or expedient. Well then, let us, if we can, apply these three tests to the business before us. Must it not be unbecoming in you to make your will the law? And, because there is no appeal against you, to resort to force while you ignore reason? Are you greater than your Lord, who says, 'I came not to do mine own will'?³ Whatever may be argued to the contrary, I maintain that it is a mark of baseness, no less than of pride, for a man, as though he had not the gift of reason, to make his

¹ Rom. xiii. 7.² 1 Cor. ii. 15.³ St. John vi. 38.

pleasure, and not reason, the rule of action; to be swayed not by judgement but by appetite. Is anything more characteristic of the beasts? And if it is unworthy of a reasonable being to live the life of cattle, who can endure that you, the supreme ruler, should so outrage nature and insult your rank? If you do so degenerate, which God forbid! you will share in the general reproach, 'Man being in honour did not understand; he is compared to the foolish beasts of burden, and is made like unto them.'¹ How very unworthy it is of you, when you possess all, not to be content with all, but you must needs make a strange to-do over the minute and inappreciable trifles of the universal dominion entrusted to you, as if they were not yours already! And here I should like you to remember Nathan's parable of the man who, having a hundred sheep, coveted the one belonging to the poor man.² Let us also recall the deed, or rather the crime, of Ahab, who was master of all, and yet was eager to get a single vineyard.³ God grant you may never have it said to you as it was to him, 'Thou hast slain and taken possession.'⁴

16. And please do not make the profit from these exemptions a pretext for them. There is no profit, unless it be that the bishops are thereby more insolent, the monks even more dissolute. How is it that they are also poorer? If you examine the balance sheet of these freedmen with anything like care, and look into their lives, no matter where, you will find the monks shamefully poor, and the bishops disgracefully worldly. These are the twin offspring of a baneful freedom. What is there to prevent the loose and disorderly rabble from boldly sinning, when there is no one to rebuke it? What can we expect but the impudent plundering and pillaging of

¹ Ps. xlix. 12.² 2 Sam. xii. 1.³ 1 Kings xxi. 2.⁴ 1 Kings xxi. 19.

defenceless religion, when there is no one to defend it? For where can men find a refuge? Shall they go to the bishops complaining of injustice? The bishops must have a merry twinkle in their eyes whether they look at the wrongs done, or the wrongs suffered. What profit is there in that blood? The only gain, I fear, is that which God threatened in the prophet, 'He shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand.'¹ For² if a man is not only exempted but puffed up, and he from whose jurisdiction he is exempted is inflamed with anger, how can the exemptor be innocent? I have said too little; we are smothering the fire; let me speak more plainly. If he who complains is spiritually dead, how can he be alive who is the cause of his complaining? Must he not, therefore, be guilty of the death of both these persons, and give sentence of death against his own soul as well, for it was he who supplied the sword which caused the death of both? This is what I meant when I said, 'Thou hast slain and taken possession.'³ And further, people who hear of these things are scandalized; they are indignant, disparage, and blaspheme, that is to say, they are wounded even unto death. The tree is not good that bears such fruit as acts of arrogance, the breaking up of houses, rivalries, the squandering of resources, so many scandals, so much hatred; and, what is more lamentable, bitter enmities and perpetual discord between the churches. You see how true are the words, 'All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient.'⁴ But suppose the thing is not even lawful. Pardon me; I shall not readily allow that the source of so much lawlessness can be lawful.

17. Would you, in fact, deem it lawful to cut off the limbs

¹ Ezek. xxxiii. 8.

² The text here is in great confusion.

³ See p. 87.

⁴ 1 Cor. x. 22.

of churches, turn order into confusion, and remove the landmarks which your fathers placed? Well then, it is the work of justice to secure to everybody what belongs to him; how can it be consistent with justice to rob any man of what belongs to him? You err if you reckon that your apostolic power is not only supreme, but the only power ordained of God. If this is your opinion, you differ from the apostle. He says, 'There is no power except from God.'¹ So then, if that which follows, 'He that resists the power withstandeth the ordinance of God,'² even if this mainly makes for you, it does not apply to you exclusively. In short, the same writer says, 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.'³ He does not say 'to the higher power', as if all power belonged to one man, but 'to the higher powers', since it resides in many. Your power, therefore, is not the only power from the Lord; there are middle and lower powers. And as those whom God hath conjoined are not to be put asunder,⁴ so those whom God hath subjoined are not to be put on a footing of equality. If you cut off a finger, attach it to your head, and let it hang side by side with your arm, as a hand for the upper parts of the body, you create a monstrosity. Something like this happens if you place the members in the body of Christ otherwise than He Himself arranged them. Unless you suppose it was not He, but another, who 'set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly evangelists, then teachers and pastors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ'.⁵ And yet it is this body which Paul sets before you with his own true apostolic eloquence, most admirably uniting it to the Head, and representing it as 'from Him

¹ Rom. xiii. 1.² Rom. xiii. 2.³ Rom. xiii. 1.⁴ St. Matt. xix. 6.⁵ 1 Cor. xii. 28.

fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, making the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love'.¹ And do not despise the mould on which you are to fashion yourself because it is the Church on earth; the pattern is derived from heaven. For not even the Son can do anything except what He hath seen the Father do,² as is obvious from what was said to Him under the name of Moses, 'See thou make everything after the pattern which was showed thee on the mount.'³

18. He understood this who said, 'I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem descending from heaven, prepared by God.'⁴ I suppose a parallel was intended, viz. that as in heaven above Seraphim and Cherubim, and all other celestial beings, even to angels and archangels, are of varying rank under one Head, viz. God; so in the Church on earth, also, primates or patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, presbyters, or abbots, and all others, are similarly ranked under one supreme pontiff. That which has God for its author, and originates in heaven, must not be lightly esteemed. But if a bishop say 'I do not desire to be under an archbishop', or an abbot 'I do not care to obey a bishop', this is not from heaven. Unless, perhaps, you have heard one of the angels crying 'I do not desire to be under the archangels', or one of the lower angelic orders declare that he could not bear to be subject to any one but God. What! you say, do you forbid me to exercise my stewardship? What I wish to prevent is the squandering of the estate. I am not so ignorant as not to know that you have been made stewards; but if so, it is for building up, not for casting down.⁵ In a word, it is required among stewards

¹ Eph. iv. 16.² St. John v. 19.³ Exod. xxv. 40.⁴ Apoc. xxi. 2.⁵ 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

that a man be found faithful.¹ When necessity requires you may be excused for exercising your dispensing power; if there is some manifest advantage, such exercise may deserve commendation. 'Advantage', I say, of the community, not your own. For when no good is done either to the community or to yourself, we certainly have not a faithful stewardship, but a cruel waste. Still, as everybody knows, there are some monasteries in different dioceses, which from their very foundation have been more closely associated with the apostolic see in accordance with the will of the founders. But the free gift of devotion is one thing; the efforts of ambition intolerant of subjection are quite another. So much for this.

CHAPTER V

The Sovereign Pontiff should uphold the Apostolic decrees and ancient ordinances throughout the world

19. It remains for your consideration to survey the condition of the Church generally, and to ascertain whether the people are subject to the clerks,² the clerks to the priests,³ the priests to God, in all due humility; if in monasteries and places of religion order is preserved, and discipline is watchful; if ecclesiastical censures are enforced against corrupt practice and perverse doctrine; if the vineyards show the goodly

¹ 1 Cor. iv, 2.

² See Bingham, *Ant. of the Christian Church*, vol. i. p. 47. Inferior orders, below presbyters and deacons.

³ The *sacerdotium in secundo et tertio ordine*, i. e. presbyters and deacons.

bloom of priestly integrity and holiness ; if the blossoms bear fruit in the obedience of faithful peoples ; if, now at length, your own apostolic commands and ordinances are observed with fitting care, lest any portion of your Master's field be found uncultivated through neglect, or filched through fraud. You may be sure that such defects may be found. To omit countless other details, I could easily point to parts of the vineyards on all sides which are lying waste ; I could show you that even of those which your own right hand has planted some are rooted up. At Rheims was it not your own mouth that published the canons submitted to the Council ?¹ Who observes them ? Who has observed them ? You are deceived if you think they are observed. If you do not think so, you have yourself erred, either in decreeing what was not to be observed, or pretending that it is observed. 'We enjoin', you said, 'that bishops as well as clergy see that they do not, either by superfluous apparel, or an unbecoming medley of colours, or by divided garments, or by the tonsure, offend the eye of the beholders, to whom they ought to be a pattern and example ; but rather by their own conduct so condemn these things, and by their mode of life evidence their love of innocence, as the dignity of the clerical order requires. But if after warning from their own bishops any do not submit within forty days, let them by authority of the same be deprived of their ecclesiastical benefices. If, however, the bishops neglect to enforce the aforesaid penalty, inasmuch as the faults of inferiors are to be attributed to none more than to indolent and negligent rulers, let them abstain from their pontifical office until such time as they do inflict the punishment appointed by us on the clergy subject to them. With this we have thought well to couple the order that no one be

¹ See introduction to this book.

ordained archdeacon or dean, unless he be deacon and priest. Moreover, if archdeacons, deans, and priors, below the aforementioned orders, contemptuously refuse to be ordained, let them be deprived of the honour they have taken upon themselves. We further forbid the bestowal of the aforesaid honours on youths not even as yet admitted to holy orders, but distinguished for their capacity and meritorious lives.'

20. These are your words; you authorized them. What effect was given to them? To this day youths, although not admitted to holy orders, are promoted in the Church. As regards the first canon, luxurious dress was forbidden, but it is not checked; the punishment was declared, but it has by no means followed the offence. It is now the fourth year since we heard the command given, and we have not as yet lamented a single cleric deprived of his benefice, or a single bishop suspended from his office. But the sequel is intensely sad. What is the sequel? Impunity, the child of carelessness, the mother of insolence, the root of impudence, the nurse of transgressions. And blessed will you be if you make it your earnest care to guard against carelessness, the first parent of all evils. But you will do your best in this respect. Now lift up your eyes and see if the spotted fur does not disgrace the clergy just as much as ever; if the immoderate division in the robe does not as much as ever almost show their nakedness. 'Does God care what a man wears? Does He not rather regard his character?' This is how men talk. But the clothing I refer to indicates deformity of mind and morals. How is it that the clergy wish to be one thing and seem another? The truth is that they are not so innocent and upright as they ought to be. Forsooth, in dress they are soldiers, in profession clergy, in conduct neither. For they neither fight like soldiers, nor preach the Gospel

like clergymen.¹ To which order do they belong? In their eagerness to belong to both, they forsake both, confound both. 'Every one', says the Apostle, 'shall rise in his own order.'² What is their order? Having sinned without order, shall they perish without order? I rather think that if the all-wise God is truly believed to leave nothing unordered, from the height above to the depth beneath, there is reason to fear their 'order' can be only where there is no 'order', but where everlasting horror dwells. O unhappy bride entrusted to the care of bridesmen such as these, who are not afraid to appropriate to themselves what was intended for her adorning! They are surely not the friends of the bridegroom, but his rivals. And now I have said enough about the things beneath you; not enough, it is true, for the adequate treatment of the subject, which is far too great for me to handle, but enough for my purpose. We must now view the things around you; but the fourth book will open the door and admit us to them.

¹ St. Bernard (Cotter Morison, p. 129) elsewhere girds at the 'cross' between the priest and the soldier. 'Not only have we lost the spirit of the old monasteries, but even the outward appearance. For this habit of ours, which of old was the sign of humility, by the monks of our day is turned into a source of pride. We can hardly find in a whole province where-withal we condescend to be clothed. The monk and the knight cut their garments, the one his cowl, the other his cloak, from the same piece.' As early as the beginning of the sixth century there are canons forbidding the clergy to wear a military cloak, or bear arms.

² 1 Cor. xv. 23.

BOOK IV

[In the fourth book St. Bernard proposes for the Pope's consideration *what is around him*, viz. (a) the Clergy, (b) the people of Rome, (c) the Cardinals, and other officers of the Court, and concludes by drawing a remarkable portrait of an ideal Head of the Church.

The People of Rome. 'The root of mischief was deep and perennial; and a momentary calm was preceded and followed by such tempests as had almost sunk the bark of St. Peter. Rome continually presented the aspect of war and discord; the churches and palaces were fortified and assaulted by the factions and families; and, after giving peace to Europe, Calixtus the Second alone had resolution and power to prohibit the use of private arms in the metropolis.' Gibbon (*Decline and Fall*, ch. lxix. A.D. 1118-1224), who, after quoting St. Bernard, adds, 'Surely this dark portrait is not coloured by the pencil of Christian charity; yet the features, however harsh and ugly, express a lively resemblance of the Romans of the twelfth century.'

Legates. 'In addition to their vicars, the popes appointed *legates* to exercise some of their functions, such as that of holding councils for the investigation of cases which had been referred to Rome, or in which the popes took it on themselves to interfere. These legates were sometimes ecclesiastics sent from Italy; but as foreign ecclesiastics were regarded with suspicion by princes, it was more usual to give the legatine commission to some bishop of the country in which the inquiry was to take place. Even kings were sometimes invested with the authority of papal legates.' Gregory VII (circ. A.D. 1070) applied to his legates the text, 'he that heareth you, heareth me.' Wherever they appeared they were the highest ecclesiastical authorities; and bishops trembled before the deacons and subdeacons who were invested with

the pope's commission to control, to judge, and to depose them. Up to the time of Anselm (circ. A. D. 1100) they had come but seldom to England and only on special business. When a 'legate of All England' was appointed it was stoutly contended that no one but the Archbishop of Canterbury could be recognized as a representative of the pope. Robertson, *Ch. Hist.*, &c.; Cotter Morison, *Saint Bernard*, p. 423.

Election of Pope. The great innovation in the method of election dates from A. D. 1059, when Nicolas II, in a Council held at Rome, published a decree 'that the cardinal bishops should first treat of the election, that they should then call in the cardinals of inferior rank, and that afterwards the rest of the clergy and people should approve the choice.' The choice of pope was thus substantially vested in the cardinals. The election was to be made 'saving the due honour and reverence of our beloved son Henry, who at present is accounted king, and hereafter will, it is hoped, if God permit, be emperor, *as we have already granted to him; and of his successors who shall personally have obtained this privilege from the apostolic see.*' There was no emperor at the time, and 'our beloved son Henry' was a child under female guardianship. Nicolas, it will be seen, so short a time before St. Bernard's day, assumed the right to dispose of temporal sovereignties. His successor did so also when he sanctioned William the Conqueror's invasion of England. See Robertson, Book III, &c.]

CHAPTER I

The things 'around' the Pope

1. If I knew better, most loving Eugenius, how you received what I have already sent, I should proceed to the rest of my work with corresponding confidence or caution; or I might, of course, stop altogether. But since the distance which separates us renders such knowledge impossible, you

must not be surprised if, as I approach (with some misgiving, I confess) the middle of my subject, my discourse flows less freely in its divided channel. Having fully treated the first part of consideration in the former books, I now take in hand the task of adding my views on the things *around* you. They, too, are really *under* you, but the nearer they are the greater is their importunity. For being before your very eyes they allow no pretence of carelessness or forgetfulness. They more furiously drive you; they more tumultuously mob you; there is reason to fear they may carry you away altogether. I do not doubt that you have learnt from your own experience what watchful and earnest consideration is required when things are so. Moreover, if careful and timely consideration does not step in, your vexation will be boundless, and your anxiety unceasing. You will not have a moment to spare, nor a free place in your heart; the labour will be greater, the profit less. I have in mind those things which come upon you daily from the city, from the court, from your own church. These things, I say, are around you; your clergy and your people, whose own bishop you are, and to whom you therefore owe a debt of special care. So are they, too, who day by day assist you, the elders of the people, the judges of the world; they, too, who belong to your household and sit at your table, your chaplains, gentlemen of the bedchamber, and inferior clergy appointed in their different offices to do you service. These are your more intimate acquaintance; they more frequently knock, disturb, and vex you.¹ These are they who are not afraid to wake the beloved before she wishes to be awaked.

¹ Cant. v. 2, 3.

CHAPTER II

The clergy and people of Rome. The care and watchfulness of shepherds in olden time

2. Now, in the first place, your clergy, who set the pattern for the clergy throughout the Church, ought to be in the best of order. Secondly, whatever is amiss in your presence reflects the more discredit upon you. It concerns the glory of your Holiness that the men you have before your eyes be so ordered, so fashioned, that they may be the mirror and the very pink of a virtuous and well-regulated life. Above all other men they should be found ready for their duties, fit for the sacraments, eager to instruct the people, circumspect in keeping themselves free from all pollution. What am I to say about the people? It is the people of Rome. I could not more briefly, or more definitely, describe them. Yet I ought to let you know what I think of your parishioners. Is there anything in history more notorious than the wantonness and pride of the Romans? A race unaccustomed to peace, familiar with tumult; a race to this very day fierce and intractable; who will never submit except when they have no power to resist. Here is the mischief; this is the care that lies heavy upon you, and you must not disguise the fact. You perhaps smile as you read this, for you are convinced that they will never be cured. Do not despair: what is required of you is the *care*, not the *cure*. You have surely heard the words, 'Take care of him'; our Lord did not say 'cure' or 'heal' him. It was a true saying, 'The doctor cannot always cure his patient.' But set a better ideal before you in your work. Paul says, 'I laboured more than they all.'¹ He

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 10.

does not say, 'I did more good than all,' or 'I bore more fruit than all,' for he most scrupulously avoided any word of pride. The man whom God taught that every one shall receive according to his work, not according to the results of the work,¹ knew better than that. Hence it was that he thought he ought to glory more in labours than in successes, as you have him saying elsewhere, 'In labours more abundant.'² So, pray, do your own work; for God will take good care of His without your solicitude and anxiety. Plant, water, bestow care: you have done your part. God, when He so wills, will certainly give the increase; it will not be you. If perchance He does not will to give it, you lose nothing, for the scripture says, 'God will render to the righteous the reward of their labours.'³ That labour is safe which no failure can render void. And I would say this without prejudice to the divine power and goodness. I know the heart of this people is hardened; but God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Who knows if He will return and pardon, convert and heal them? But I do not propose to dictate to God what He ought to do; would that I could persuade you to do what you ought, and as you ought.

3. I know I am treading on dangerous ground, and have to deal with some very nice points. How shall I approach the perilous task of saying what I think? I see clearly what is hanging over my head. The cry of 'innovation' will be raised; for no one can deny the justice of my complaint. But I would not allow even the plea of novelty. For I am quite sure that what I urge was once the custom, and, like all other customs, it might fall into disuse; but nothing can disturb the fact that the custom once prevailed. Can any one

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 8.² 2 Cor. xi. 23.³ Wisd. of Sol. x. 17.

with truth deny that to be a custom which was not only done once upon a time, but beyond a doubt was the practice for a considerable time? I will tell you what I refer to, though it will do no good. Why? Because it will not please the rulers¹ of the Church, who have more regard for the splendour of their office than for the claims of truth. Before your day there were men who would devote themselves entirely to feeding the sheep; they gloried in the shepherd's work and name; they counted nothing humiliating except what they thought hindered the welfare of the sheep, for they did not seek their own interests, but spent upon the sheep. They spent care, they spent their substance, they spent even themselves. Wherefore one of them says, 'I will be spent out for your souls.'² It is as though they said, 'We came not to be ministered unto, but to minister';³ and so, as often as it became them, they made the Gospel free of cost. The only gain they sought from those in their keeping, the only pomp, the only pleasure, was, if possible, to make them a perfect people for the Lord. That was their constant concern, even in much sorrow of heart, and pain of body, in labour and care, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness.

4. Let me now ask what has become of this practice? A very different one has crept in: men's ambitions have undergone a great change, and I would that the change were not for the worse! We have still among us, I admit, anxious care, wholesome emulation, and a sense of responsibility. These have been passed on to you without diminution. In support of what I say, there is the fact that you do not spare your substance any more than your predecessors did. But it is the change in the investment that makes the difference. It

¹ *Satrapis*. But see Judges iii. 3; 2 Chron. ix. 14, Vulg.

² 2 Cor. xii. 15.

³ St. Matt. xx. 28.

is a great abuse. Few look to the mouth of the lawgiver : all have regard to his hands. And not without good reason. The hands do all the Pope's business. Show me a man in the whole city of Rome who welcomed you as Pope without having his price, or hoping to get it. Even when they profess to be your very humble servants, they aim at being your masters. They pledge their fidelity only that they may more conveniently injure the confiding. Hence it is that there can be no deliberation from which they think they ought to be excluded ; there will be no secret into which they do not worm their way. If the doorkeeper keeps one of them waiting a minute or two, I should not like to be in his shoes. Now for a few illustrations, so that you may know whether I understand this people's ways, and how far. First of all, they are wise to do evil, but they know not how to do good. Hateful to heaven and earth, they have laid hands on both ; they are impious towards God, heedless in holy things ; turbulent among themselves, jealous of their neighbours, barbarous to foreigners, they love no man and are loved of none ; and when they aim at being feared by all, all must fear. These are they who cannot bear to be beneath, though they are not qualified to be at the head, faithless to superiors, insufferable to inferiors. They have no modesty in asking, and no shame in refusing. They worry you to get what they want ; they cannot rest till they get it ; they have no gratitude once they have got it. They have taught their tongue to speak great things, when there is but little doing. They are lavish promisers, niggardly performers ; the smoothest of flatterers, and the worst of backbiters ; artless dissemblers, and malignant traitors. I allow myself to digress thus far because I think you ought to be fully and precisely admonished of these things which are around you.

5. Let us now return to our subject. How is it that churches are robbed to provide the purchase-money of the flatterers who cry 'Well done! Well done! '? The sustenance of the poor is scattered broadcast in the streets of the rich. The money glitters in the mud; men rush from all sides to get it; the poor man does not pick it up, but the stronger, or, it may be, the swiftest runner. Still, I must in fairness say this custom, or rather this deadly disease, did not begin with you; would that it might end with you. But let us proceed. Amid these surroundings you, the shepherd, parade in cloth of gold, with every luxury at your command. The sheep, what do they receive? If I might speak the truth, these are the pastures of demons rather than of sheep. Did Peter, forsooth, do such things, or Paul thus sport himself? You see that the one object of the Church's zeal is the preservation of your dignity. Honour claims all, holiness nothing, or but little. If for good reason you attempt to waive ceremony, and show a little friendliness, 'No,' say they: 'it is not becoming': 'it does not suit the time': 'it is not accordant with your rank': 'bear in mind the important part you play.' The last thing mentioned is the will of God; there is no hesitation because men's salvation is at stake; let us call nothing salutary but what is high and mighty; and whatever gives the scent of glory, let that be righteousness. Thus all humility is reckoned a disgrace among the inmates of the palace, so that you may more easily find a man who really is humble than you will one who is willing to appear so. The fear of the Lord is counted simplicity, not to say folly. They revile a prudent man, who is on good terms with his own conscience, as a hypocrite. A lover of quiet, moreover, who sometimes finds leisure to think about himself, they call a useless drone.

CHAPTER III

The necessity of curtailiug extravagance in dress, &c.

6. How is it then with you? Are you not yet awake, and on your guard against those who have surrounded you with the snares of death? Pray bear with me yet a little while. Nay, rather, pardon me when I say these things with less temerity than timidity. I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, and I would it were as profitable as it is strong. I know where you dwell; unbelievers and subverters are with you. They are wolves, not sheep; but you are the shepherd of these as well as of the rest. The consideration will be profitable if it leads you to the discovery of some means of converting them lest they subvert you. They were sheep and turned into wolves; why despair of their turning back again into sheep? Here, here, I do not spare you, so that God may spare you. At least either deny that you are shepherd over this people, or show that you are. You will not deny it, lest he, whose chair you fill, deny that you are his heir. I mean, of course, Peter, who never, so far as can be ascertained, paraded himself decked with gems, or robed in silks; he was not covered with gold, he did not ride on a white steed, he was not surrounded by soldiers, nor fenced off from his flock by noisy attendants. He thought that without all this he could amply fulfil the salutary command, ‘If you love me, feed my sheep.’¹ In all this painted pomp you are not Peter’s successor, but Constantine’s. What I insist on is that while you may tolerate such pomp and glory to suit the

¹ St. John xxi. 15.

time, you must not claim it as a debt due to you. I rather urge you to consider those things which are a debt due from you. If on state occasions you are robed in purple and decked with gold, I am sure this does not mean that you, the shepherd's heir, shrink from the shepherd's toil, or the shepherd's care; it does not imply that you are ashamed of the Gospel. Albeit, if you willingly preach the Gospel, you, too, have a glorious place among the apostles. To preach the Gospel is to feed the sheep. Do the work of an evangelist, and you have done the work of a shepherd.

7. 'You are advising me', you say, 'to feed dragons and scorpions, not sheep.' For that very reason, I reply, set about them; but with the word, not with the sword. Why should you again try to use the sword, which you were once for all bidden to put into its sheath? Yet if any one should deny that you have the sword, he does not seem to me to have paid sufficient attention to his Lord's words, 'Put back thy sword into the sheath.'¹ To you, then, the sword belongs, and it should be unsheathed, it may be with your consent, though not by your hand. Otherwise, if it no way belonged to you, when the apostles said, 'Lo, here are two swords,'² the Lord would not have replied, 'It is enough'; He would have said, 'They are too many.' Both swords belong to the Church, the spiritual and the material; the one is to be used to defend the Church, but the other must even be banished from the Church; the one is wielded by the priest, the other by the soldier, but of course with your consent, and at the command of the Emperor. More of this elsewhere. Now, however, seize the sword which was entrusted to you that you might strike; wound, for the saving of their souls, if not all, if not many even, at all events as many as you can.

¹ St. John xviii. 10, 11. ² St. Luke xxii. 38. See Appendix, p. 171.

8. You say, 'I am not better than my fathers.' I will not ask to which of your fathers this exasperating house ever hearkened, which of them it did not mock. Therefore do you the more firmly take your stand if haply they may hear, and be still; insist even when they resist. When I speak thus, I shall, perhaps, be said to use extravagant language. Was it I who said, 'Be instant in season, out of season'?¹ Call the apostle 'extravagant' if you dare. The prophet is commanded to 'cry aloud and cease not'.² To whom was he to cry unless it was to the wicked and to sinners? 'Declare unto my people their wickedness, and to the house of Jacob their sins.'³ Carefully observe that the same people are called 'wicked', and 'the people of the Lord'. Take the same view of those with whom you have to do. Although they are wicked, although they are unrighteous, see that you are not told, 'Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of my brethren, ye did it not to me.'⁴ I admit that this people has ever been of a hard forehead and of a wild heart; but I fail to see how you can know that their heart cannot be tamed. What has never been may yet be. You may despair, but with God no word shall be impossible.⁵ If they are of a hard forehead, do you also harden yours. Nothing is so hard that it does not yield to that which is harder. The Lord said to the prophet, 'I have made thy forehead harder than their foreheads.'⁶ If you have so dealt with that people that you can say, 'My people, what ought I to have done for thee that I have not done,' this is your only sound defence. If you have thus done, and yet have done no good, there is still something that you can do, something that you can say. Go

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 2.

² Isa. lviii. 1.

³ St. Luke i. 37.

² Isa. lviii. 1.

⁴ St. Matt. xxv. 45.

⁶ Ezek. iii. 8.

forth from Ur of the Chaldees,¹ and say, 'I must preach the Gospel also to other cities.'² I think you will not regret your exile if you exchange Rome for the world.

CHAPTER IV

The Pope's colleagues and coadjutors at the Lateran

9. Let us come to your colleagues³ and coadjutors at the Lateran. They are busy on your behalf: they are the inner circle of your friends. It follows that if they are good, you more than any one else reap the benefit; if they are bad, you more than any one else bear the loss. Do not say you are well if you have a pain in your side; what I mean is, do not say you are good if you rely on bad men. To put it differently, suppose you are good, what fruit (as I remember saying in a former book) can your goodness, the goodness of an individual man, bear? What profit does your individual righteousness bring to the churches of God, when the prevalent

¹ Gen. xi. 31; xv. 7.

² St. Luke iv. 43.

³ St. Bernard's word is *collaterales*. In the eleventh century the seven cardinal bishops had been appointed to the Church of St. John *Lateran* to officiate in turn for the Pope. This basilica, inscribed on each side of the entrance, 'The Mother and Mistress of all Churches of the city and world,' stands on the site of the house of Plautius Lateranus, who was put to death by Nero (see Tacitus, *Annals*, xi. 30, 36; xiii. 11; xv. 49, 60), and is named after him. It was founded by Constantine, who assisted with his own hands in digging the foundations. 'The Chapter of the Lateran still takes precedence of that of St. Peter's; the ceremony of taking possession of the Lateran Basilica is one of the first observed on the election of a new Pope, whose coronation takes place in it, so that for 1,500 years it has preserved its rank and privileges.' St. Bernard, as his manner is, appears to be playing with the word.

views are those of men otherwise disposed? The truth is that not even your own goodness beset by bad men is safer than bodily health would be with a serpent hard by. There is no escaping from this internal mischief. And on the other hand, if you have good men about you, the oftener they assist you the better. But whether your colleagues relieve or aggravate your cares, who deserves the credit of it more than yourself for either choosing or admitting such men? I do not speak of all; for there are some whom you have not chosen; they have chosen you. But they have no power except what you have either given or allowed them. So we come back to the same point. Blame yourself for whatever you have to suffer at the hands of him who has no more power than what you have given him. As to the rest, with these exceptions, the men for the work of this ministry, as you perceive, are not to be elected or collected without due consideration. It is your duty, like Moses, to summon, whencesoever, and admit to their office, old men, not young men;¹ old, I mean, not so much in years as character; men whom you have got to know because they are the elders of the people. Surely they who are to judge the world ought to be chosen out of the whole world. By no means let a man meddle with this business because he begs the office. Deliberation, not entreaty, must be your guide to action. Some things we must yield to importunate request, or grant to deserving need. But in so doing we are disposing of our own. When, however, it is not lawful for me to do as I wish myself, the petitioner has no standing-place, unless, perchance, his petition is that his wish may lawfully be mine, and not simply that it may be mine. One man intercedes for another; another perhaps even asks for himself. Suspect the man on

¹ Num. xi, 16. See Appendix, p. 171.

whose behalf you are entreated : the man who asks for himself is already judged. It does not matter whether a man himself asks, or does so through another man. If a cleric who does not belong to the court is always about the court, you may be sure he is the sort of person who is on the look out for favours. A flatterer, and a man who smooths his tongue to suit everybody, regard as a petitioner, even if he asks for nothing. There is nothing in the scorpion's face to cause alarm; the sting is in the tail.

10. If, as mostly happens, you find your heart softening under the blandishments of such men, remember what is written, 'Every man setteth on first the good wine, and when men have drunk freely, then that which is worse.'¹ You should set the same value on the humility of the man who fears and of the man who hopes. The crafty and deceitful man has a peculiar knack of putting on the garb of humility when he wishes to get something; he is like those of whom the Scripture says, 'There is a wicked man who hangeth down his head sadly, but inwardly he is full of deceit.'² To see how true this is, take a clear and familiar illustration from among yourselves. How many of suppliant mien have you admitted whom you have afterwards had to put up with in their moroseness, insolence, stubbornness, rebellion? The secret mischief, hidden at first, is at last revealed. The stripling full of words, aiming at eloquence, when he is void of wisdom, you should look upon as every way the enemy of righteousness. To guard you against false brethren of this sort your Master says, 'Lay hands hastily on no man.'³

11. So, then, having shut out the whole race of these pestilent men, make it your chief care to bring in those whose admission you will not afterwards regret. The frequent revision

¹ St. John. ii. 10.

² Eccclus. xix. 26.

³ 1 Tim. v. 22.

of your own acts is discreditable, and it is not fitting that your judgement should be frequently called in question. Accordingly, diligently examine for yourself, and with the assistance of the men who love you, whatever is to be done. Examine beforehand, because, once the thing is done, correction is too late. The wise man's counsel is, 'Do nothing without counsel, and when thou hast once done thou shalt not repent.'¹ And be assured of this, that men fit to be admitted can hardly find favour with the court; if possible, therefore, your choice should be of men approved, not to be proved. We, in our monasteries, welcome all sorts of men in the hope of doing them good, but the court has been accustomed to more readily welcome good men than make men good. If, however, as we have shown, there have been at the court more good men who have failed than bad men who have improved, we must certainly look for men whose failure we need not fear, and whose progress we need not desire, inasmuch as they are already perfect.

12. So then, in choosing men, select not him that willet, nor him that runneth, but such as hesitate or refuse; even put pressure on these, and compel them to come in. Your spirit may rest in such, I think, as are not of a shameless forehead, but are modest, and have the fear of God; who fear nothing but God, and hope for nothing but from God; who observe not the hands of those who approach them, but their necessities; who stand up manfully for the afflicted, and judge in equity for the meek upon earth; men who are of orderly life, proved holiness, ready to obey, meek in suffering, submissive under discipline, stern in censuring, who hold the Catholic faith, are faithful in their stewardship, lovers of peace and concord, consistent in maintaining unity; men upright in

¹ Ecclus. xxxii. 19.

judgement, prudent in counsel, discreet in commanding, careful in planning, strenuous in action, modest in speech; tranquil in adversity, devout in prosperity; as regards zeal, sober-minded; prone to pity; in leisure time not idle; given to hospitality, but not too convivial; careful in business affairs, but not anxious; not covetous of another man's goods, nor lavish of their own; everywhere, and under all circumstances, circumspect; men who when bidden, and necessity requires, would not decline to serve as ambassadors for Christ, nor unbidden would aspire to the office, nor make their modest excuses a plea for obstinate refusal; who when sent do not go after gold, but follow Christ; who do not regard their commission as so much gain, nor look for reward, but seek fruit; who in the eyes of kings are as John, to the Egyptians are as Moses, to fornicators as Phinees, to idolaters as Elijah, to the covetous as Elisha, to liars as Peter, to blasphemers as Paul, to traffickers as Christ; who do not despise the common people, but teach them; do not flatter the rich, but frighten them; do not oppress the poor, but cherish them; do not dread the threats of rulers, but despise them; do not make a great to-do when they enter on their work, nor show signs of anger when they leave it; who do not rob the churches, but improve them; do not empty men's pockets, but refresh their hearts, and correct their offences; who take care of their own reputation, and do not envy another man his; who zealously cultivate prayerful habits, and in everything rely more on prayer than on their own industry and labour; whose coming bringeth peace, whose departure we regret; whose speech is edifying, their life righteous, their presence a pleasure, their memory blessed; who to the individual are amiable not in word, but in deed, while they command the respect of the world at large, not by their arrogance, but by the discharge of their duties;

who are humble with the humble, and innocent with the innocent ; who sternly rebuke the hardened, restrain the wicked, duly recompense the proud ; who are not swift to enrich themselves or their relations with the portion of the widow, and the patrimony of the Crucified ; who freely give what they have freely received, judgement to those who suffer wrong, vengeance on nations, rebuking peoples ; who, in short, like the seventy whom Moses chose, are perceived to have taken of your spirit, and by it, whether absent or present, strive to please you, and to please God ; who return to you, weary indeed, but not laden with gifts ; while they even glory, not because they have brought with them all the curiosities and treasures of the lands, but because they have left behind them peace to kingdoms, the law for barbarians, quiet for monasteries, order for the churches, discipline for the clergy, a people acceptable to God, zealous of good works.

CHAPTER V

The Pope should refuse bribes. Martin and Gaufrid. The arrogance of the Pope's attendants

13. I think it worth while to here plunge into the story of our dear brother Martin, whose memory is sweet to me. You have heard the story, but may not perhaps remember it. He was a Cardinal Presbyter,¹ and for some time was Legate

¹ Innocent II gave him this rank in A.D. 1130. His 'legatio' date is A.D. 1132. He did not belong to Clairvaux, and it is not certain that he was a Cistercian at all. He was probably one of St. Bernard's intimate friends. The origin of 'Cardinal Presbyters' is not clearly ascertained. Bellarmin thought they were so called from being 'fixed in some principal

in Dacia, but returned so poor that with his money almost gone, and the horses nearly worn out, he could scarcely reach Florence. There the bishop of the place gave him a horse, on which he rode as far as Pisa, where we happened to be at the time. The next day, I think it was, the bishop, who had a lawsuit pending, with the day of hearing rapidly approaching, followed Martin, and began to solicit the votes of his friends. One by one their support had been solicited, and then came Martin's turn. The bishop relied more upon him, because he could not be unmindful of the recent act of kindness. Martin thus replied: 'You have deceived me. I did not know that this business was so close. Take your horse: there it is in the stable.' And that very hour he gave it up to him. What say you to that, my dear Eugenius? To think of a legate returning from a land of gold without gold! Does it not sound like news from another world? To think of his passing through a land of silver, and not know silver! Above all, to have at once rejected a gift which might not have been free from suspicion!

14. But oh! how glad I am here to have an opportunity of reviving the memory of a man who bears a name of sweetest fragrance. I mean Gaufrid, Bishop of Carnotes, who for many years, at his own expense, vigorously conducted an embassy churches, where baptism might be administered, which were therefore called *Ecclesiae vel Tituli Cardinales*'. Stillingfleet was of opinion that they were the chief Presbyters 'in large and populous cities . . . chosen out from the rest, to be as the Bishop's Council', and were therefore called *Cardinales Presbyteri*. See Bingham, *Antiq.* I, p. 276. 'As the name of "pope" or "papa" was originally common to all bishops, so the chief presbyters and deacons of any church to which a cure of souls was attached were apt to have the term "Cardinal" applied to them by way of distinction long before it was applied to the presbyters and deacons of the parish churches of Rome in particular' (*Dict. Christ. Antiq.*, s. v. 'Cardinal'). There were twenty-eight chief parish churches in the city.

in Aquitania. What I speak of, I saw myself. I was with him in that country when a certain priest presented him with a fish generally called a sturgeon. The legate inquired how much it would fetch. 'I cannot', said he, 'accept it unless you receive the value'; and he paid the would-be donor, reluctant and blushing to take the money, five gold pieces. On another occasion, when we were in a certain town, a lady of the place devoutly offered him, together with a towel, two or three dessert-dishes, of beautiful workmanship, but made of wood. The man of tender conscience gazed at them for some time, and praised them, but he would not accept them. Was he likely ever to receive silver dishes after refusing wooden ones? Nobody could say to the legate, 'We have made Abraham rich.'¹ But he, like Samuel, was thus speaking freely to all: 'Witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a bribe? and I will this day despise it, and I will restore it to you.'² Oh! that there were given to us plenty of men such as these we have glanced at. You would be the happiest man in the world, and the age the most delightful. Would not the blessedness of those times seem to you only next to the joys of eternity, when, wherever you turned, you saw yourself surrounded on all sides with so glorious a band of the blessed?

15. If I know you, you are perplexed; you sigh deeply and say to yourself, 'Do you suppose that is ever likely to come to pass?' Your thoughts run thus—'Our present position is plain enough. How far is what you tell me possible? May I live and have the good fortune of seeing it accomplished! Oh! that I might be spared to behold

¹ Gen. xiv. 23.

² 1 Sam. xii. 3.

the Church of God supported by such pillars ! Oh ! if I might see my Lord's spouse in the keeping of such fidelity, entrusted to such purity ! How blessed would be my lot ! how safe ! if I might behold about me men of that class both guarding and bearing witness to my life, to whom I might safely impart my secrets, and communicate my plans ; to whom I might pour out my heart as to a second self ; who, if I wished to turn aside, would not allow me, would check me in my headlong course : would wake me out of my slumber ; whose respectful freedom would check my pride and correct my error ; whose constancy and courage would steady me when wavering, cheer me when desponding ; whose faith and holiness would urge me on to whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are modest, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.' Now, my dear Eugenius, look once more at the present condition of the Court or Church, and the pursuits of the prelates, particularly of those who are about your person.

16. So far, so good. But I have only gently touched the wall, I have not dug into it.¹ You may dig and see, like the son of the prophet. I must not go farther. One obvious remark I will make. Your attendants ridiculously endeavour to take precedence of their fellow presbyters. This is contrary to reason, to antiquity, and to the general consent of authority. And if trickery works, as is commonly the case, its own downfall, surely better this than that the highest order be despised. However that may be, their chief plea in defence of their ambitious efforts is very absurd. 'We', say they, 'are those who at every function are more closely associated with our master, the Holy Father ; when he sits, we sit nearest to him ; when he goes in procession, we

¹ Ezek. viii. 8.

follow next to him.' All this is not a privilege accorded to rank, but a debt due from assiduous service ; through the very formalities of service the work gives meaning to the name of 'deacon'. In short, while the presbyters in ordered session surround the throne, ye deacons stand at the foot. Ye stand near that your master may have you in greater readiness. In the Gospels we read that 'there arose a strife among the disciples as to which of them might seem to be the greatest'.¹ You would be happy, Eugenius, if the rest of the things around you could be controlled after the same pattern.²

CHAPTER VI

It is not becoming in the Pope to be absorbed in the management of his household to the neglect of weightier matters. He should have a steward

17. We are now tired of the Court ; let us leave the palace ; they are waiting for us at home. The inmates are not only around you, but in a way they are inside you. It is not superfluous to consider how you propose to order your household, to provide for those who are in your lap and in your bosom. I say that the consideration is not only not superfluous, but that it is necessary. Listen to Paul's words, 'If a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God ?'³ And again, 'If any man provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.'⁴ When

¹ St. Luke xxii. 24.

² That is, as our Lord controlled His disciples.

³ 1 Tim. iii. 5.

⁴ 1 Tim. v. 8.

I say this, I am not admonishing you, occupied as you are with matters of the highest importance, to devote yourself to the lowest; in a way, to grow less, and spend on trifles what you owe to weighty affairs. Why entangle yourself in those things from which God has rescued you? 'All these things', He says, 'shall be added unto you.'¹ Still, you ought to do these things, and not leave the others undone. But while you personally attend to the great things, you should also personally provide representatives to see to your little things. For if a single servant cannot at the same time look after the cattle, and take charge of the tables, how can you without assistance attend both to your own house and to the house of the Lord? Of this latter we read, 'O Israel, how great is the house of the Lord!'² Your mind, intent on matters of so great and so varied importance, ought, in fact, to be relieved of all anxiety for more trifling and baser things. It should be free from all prepossessing and engrossing occupations. It should be of such nobility that no unworthy affection can drag it down. It should be so straightforward that no evil purpose can turn it aside. It should be cautious without harbouring stealthy suspicion. It should be watchful lest it be distracted by impertinent and inquisitive thoughts. It should be so rooted and grounded that it be not shaken by any sudden blast.³ It should be invincible, so that it sink not under even lasting tribulation. It should be so large that it can find ample room for any temporal loss.

18. Be quite sure that you must be stripped of these blessings, and smitten with these curses, if you divide your

¹ St. Matt. vi. 33.

² Baruch iii. 24.

³ 'The mind I sway by, and the heart I bear,
Shall never sag with doubt, nor shake with fear.'

Macbeth, v. iii. 9-10.

attention and wish to share yourself between the things of God and your own trivial affairs. You must get some one for the work, some one to do the grinding for you. *For* you, I say, not *with* you. There are some things you will do yourself, some with the assistance of other men, and some entirely through the agency of others. Who is a wise man, and he will understand these things? You must not let your consideration go to sleep over them. Now, in my opinion, the details of your household management belong to the class last mentioned. As I have intimated, you will do them by means of someone else. But your representative, if he be not faithful, will cheat; if he be not prudent, men will cheat him. So then, you must look out for a man both faithful and prudent to set over your household.¹ Still, he will be useless if a third quality be lacking. Do you ask what this is? It is *authority*. For what is the good of his wishing to manage, and knowing how, as necessity arises, if he cannot act according to his wishes and his knowledge? You must therefore give him a free hand. If you think this is unreasonable, bear in mind that he is a faithful servant, who, nevertheless, desires to follow reason; and he is a prudent servant, who, nevertheless, knows how to follow reason. But a faithful and sagacious will can only avail when it is so adequately supported that it can act with perfect ease and freedom, and command the unhesitating obedience of all. All the rest must therefore be under him. Let him brook no opposition. Let there be no one to say, 'Why have you done so?' Let him have power to shut out and let in whom he chooses, to change the servants, to transfer the service to whom he likes and when he likes. Let all so fear him that all may benefit by him. Let him be before all that he may be a boon to all,

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 45.

and in all respects. Do not lend an ear when he is secretly disparaged by whisperers and backbiters; rather rebuke such slanderers. And I would like you to make a general rule of regarding with suspicion any man who is afraid to say openly what he has told you privately. But if in your judgement it ought to be told face to face, and he refuse, pronounce him an informer, not an accuser.

19. So then let one person assign their several duties to all the rest, and let the rest be responsible to the one person. You should trust him, and so gain time for yourself and the Church of God. If the choice lies between a trustworthy servant and a prudent one, it is better to appoint the former. Of the two this is certainly the safer course. However, if you cannot find a suitable person, even if a man be not so faithful as he ought, I advise you to put up with it rather than lose your way in this labyrinth of domestic care. Remember that Judas was our Lord's steward.¹ What is more disgraceful for a bishop than that he should spend his energy on his furniture, and his bit of property? He should not be always prying into things, asking about every thing, eaten up with suspicion, and disturbed at every little loss or symptom of neglect. I say this to shame some of that sort, who never let a day pass without taking an inventory of all their belongings, reckoning up every item, and demanding an account of mites and farthings. Not so the Egyptian who gave up all to Joseph, and knew not what he had in his house.² The Christian should blush who cannot trust a Christian with his property. He was not a believer, but he had faith in his servant, and set him over all his goods—and the servant was a foreigner.

20. Herein is a marvellous thing. The bishops can command men enough and to spare for the trust of souls, and yet

¹ St. John xii. 6.

² Gen. xxxix. 6.

cannot find a single person in whose hands they may place their small estates. They must be excellent judges of the relative values of things to take such great care of the smallest matters, and so little of the greatest. But, as we are given to clearly understand, we do more patiently suffer Christ's loss than our own. We meet our daily expenditure with a daily scrutiny, and know nothing of the constant damage which the Lord's flock sustains. There is a daily discussion with our servants about the price of food and the number of loaves : a conference with our presbyters to consider the sins of our people is a very rare occurrence. The ass falls, and there is some one to lift him up : the soul perishes, and no one takes account thereof. And no wonder, when we do not perceive our own unceasing defects ! Are we not angry, do we not burn with indignation, are we not tormented with anxiety, whenever we cast up the figures ? How much more patiently should we bear material than mental loss ! 'Wherefore', says the Apostle, 'do ye not rather suffer to be defrauded?'¹ You who teach others, pray teach yourself, if you have not already done so, to set a higher price upon yourself than upon your belongings. Those transitory things which cannot abide with you, make them pass away from you, not through you. The flowing stream hollows out a channel for itself ; similarly temporal things coursing through the mind eat away the conscience. If the torrent can sweep across the fields without injuring the crops, you may confidently expect to handle such matters without mental hurt. I counsel you by all means to endeavour to divert the onset of these things. Many of them should be unknown to you, the greater number be unnoticed, some forgotten.

21. There are, however, some things as to which I would

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 7.

not have you ignorant : I refer to the character and pursuits of your various servants. You ought not to be the last to know the faults of your household, which, as we are aware, is the experience of very many. Wherefore, as I have said, let another manage the rest, but do you yourself see to the discipline. Trust that to nobody. If in your presence there is any tendency to arrogant conversation, or showy dress, stretch out your hand against such offences ; be yourself the avenger of the wrong done to you. Impunity is the mother of audacity, audacity brings forth excess. Holiness becomes the house of a bishop, modesty becomes it, good repute becomes it ; the guardian of all these is discipline. The priests of the household are either more highly esteemed than others, or they are the common talk. In the look, dress, gait of the priests about your person you should allow no trace of immodesty or indecency. Let your fellow bishops learn from you not to have about them boys with their hair curled, or effeminate youths.¹ It is surely unbecoming for a bishop to go hither and thither surrounded by fops who wear the turban and use the curling iron. And remember the admonition of the wise man, ‘They are thy daughters : make not thy face cheerful toward them.’²

22. And yet what I am commending to you is not austerity, but gravity. The former puts to flight the weaklings ; the latter checks the frivolous. If a man be austere, he is odious : if he be not grave, he becomes contemptible ; yet in everything there is a happy medium. I would not have you act with

¹ Archbishop Anselm (A.D. 1094-5) ‘in the beginning of Lent, when the Court was at Hastings, refused to give the customary ashes and benediction to the young nobles who affected an effeminate style of dress and manners—wearing long hair which they curled and adorned like women.’

² Ecclus. vii. 24.

too great severity, nor with too great laxity. What is more pleasing than that moderation which prevents your severity making you oppressive, and your familiarity making you contemptible? In the palace be the Holy Father, at home the father of the family. Let your household love you; if they do not, make them fear you. It is always well to so keep the door of the lips as not to shut out the grace of affability. The hasty tongue must therefore always be bridled, but specially at the feast. Your deportment will be most fitting if in action you are strict, in look cheerful, in speech serious. Let not the chaplains, and those who are associated with you in the divine offices, be without honour. It is for you to provide yourself with such men as are worthy. Let all pay attention to them, as it is to yourself. Let them receive at your hand what is necessary for their support. Let them be content with the provision you make for them, and do you see that they want not. If you catch one of them begging more from your visitors, judge him as you would Gehazi;¹ and you must have the same rule for the doorkeepers, and the other officials. But all this is superfluous, for I remember that you long ago planned it all. What is more worthy of your apostleship? What more wholesome for your conscience, more conducive to good report, more profitable by way of example? It is an excellent rule to banish greed beyond the reach of scandal,² and not only to be innocent of it.

¹ 2 Kings v. 20.

² Isa. xxxiii. 15. The Vulgate has *qui proicit . . . ex calumnia*. R. V. 'who despiseth the gain of oppressions, or (Margin) fraud'.

CHAPTER VII

The ideal Pope

23. I will now bring this book to a close, but in ending I should like by way of epilogue to either recapitulate some things already said, or add some which I passed over. Before all, consider that the holy Roman Church of which God has made you head, is the mother of churches, not their mistress ; but that you are not sovereign lord of the bishops, but one of them, the brother, too, of those who love God, and a partaker with them that fear Him. As for the rest, consider that you ought to be a model of righteousness, a mirror of holiness, a pattern of piety, the asserter of truth, the defender of the faith, the teacher of nations, the guide of Christians, the friend of the bridegroom, the leader of the bride to her spouse, the ordainer of the clergy, the shepherd of the people, the instructor of the foolish, the refuge of the oppressed, the advocate of the poor, the hope of the wretched, the protector of the fatherless, the judge of the widow, the eye of the blind, the tongue of the dumb, the staff of the aged, the avenger of wickedness, the fear of bad men, the glory of the good, a rod for the powerful, a hammer for tyrants, the father of kings, the mitigater of laws, the dispenser from canons, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the priest of the Most High, the vicar of Christ, the Lord's anointed, and lastly the God of Pharaoh. Understand what I say : the Lord will give thee understanding. When power and wickedness go hand in hand, we must claim something for you more than human. Let your countenance be upon them that do evil.¹ Let him

¹ Ps. xxxiv. 16.

who fears not man, nor dreads the sword, fear the breath of your anger. Let him fear your prayer who has despised your admonition. Let him think that he who incurs your wrath incurs the wrath not of man but of God. He who has not heard you, let him quake at the thought that God will hear you, and will be against him. We now turn to the discussion of what remains, namely, the things above you. I shall hope, with God's help, to pay this debt in one book, and so be quit of my promise.

BOOK V

[IN this book St. Bernard considers the things *above us* (ch. i), first discussing the respective provinces of Opinion, Faith, and Understanding (ch. ii, iii), then proceeding to the Holy Angels (ch. iv, v), the Being of God (ch. vi, vii, viii, xi), the Person of Christ (ch. ix, x). In ch. xii we have God the Judge, and a conception of Hell in striking accord with much of the exposition of modern times. The book concludes (ch. xiv) with an impressive illustration of the mystical interpretation of Holy Scripture (Eph. iii. 18)—God regarded as ‘length, breadth, height, depth’, and our ‘comprehension’ of Him as such.

The Schoolmen. The term *scholastic* originally denoted a *teacher* in the schools founded throughout his empire by Charlemagne under the direction of our countryman, Alcuin of York. Used as an adjective, the word described the subjects taught—‘scholastic history,’ ‘scholastic philosophy,’ ‘scholastic theology,’ during the thousand years of the Transition Period, from the sixth to the sixteenth century.

In a movement so extended there were, of course, many developments. Of the schoolmen by whom St. Bernard may have been influenced, directly or indirectly, we need only mention John Scotus Erigena, John the Irishman (b. between A. D. 800 and A. D. 810, d. about A. D. 877); Berengarius of Tours (A. D. 999–1088); Lanfranc, his opponent (b. A. D. 1005, d. A. D. 1089, Abbot of Bec, and from A. D. 1070 Abp. of Canterbury); Roscelin, the reputed founder of Nominalism (condemned at the Council of Soissons, A. D. 1092); William of Champeaux (b. A. D. 1070, d. A. D. 1121); Abelard, pupil of the two preceding (b. A. D. 1079, d. A. D. 1142); Anselm (b. A. D. 1033, d. A. D. 1109, also Abbot of Bec and Abp. of Canterbury); and Gilbert of Poitiers, whose views were discussed at Rheims (A. D. 1148).

Whatever may be said of after times when Dialectics became a branch of professorial study in the Universities of the Middle Ages, it would be doing great injustice to represent these men as mere triflers, hair-splitters, verbal quibblers, syllogistic conjurers, and so forth. They ‘often described

wearisome circles, rushed vehemently into *culs-de-sac*, wandered about a labyrinth, vainly demanding an outlet'. Many of their folios may be fossils, but 'we may surely believe that their way was foreseen, that they had a Guide, that there was a method which all these bewilderments were to help them in finding out'. There were deep fires burning in their bosoms, and both the intellect and the affections were in training for the better future.

Nor would it be right to represent them as in revolt against authority. The human reason was awaking after its long slumber, and the giant was not easily controlled. The revolt was not so much against authority, as against logic. John the Irishman rightly felt that Aristotle's 'Categories' belonged to the regions of sensible and intelligible things, but that when we ascend to the consideration of Him who transcends sense and intelligence, logical categories are out of place—God is neither Genus, Species, nor Accident. There was an earnest desire, not to uproot the Faith, but to find an intellectual basis for it, not to discard either reason or faith, but to reconcile their claims. 'Realism', 'Nominalism,' 'Conceptualism,' to vast numbers are only names, but to those who have eyes to see they stand for the profoundest controversy which has ever engaged the thought of man, and are expressions of man's determination to get, if possible, to the bottom of things, and ascertain if reality anywhere exists, or life is but a dream. Even Abelard—all grudges between him and Bernard were set at rest; let us, too, think tenderly, and speak gently of him¹—is entitled to our gratitude and

¹ 'How holily, how devotedly, in what a Catholic spirit he first made confession of his faith, then of his sins; with what an affection of heart he received the food for his journey, the pledge of eternal life, the Body of the Redeemer; how faithfully he commended his body and soul to Him; our brothers are witness, and the whole society of that monastery. Thus Master Peter (Abelard) finished his days, and he who was known throughout the world for an unparalleled master of science, persevering in the learning of Him who said "Learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart", passed, as we have a right to believe, into His presence.' *Letters from Cluni*, where Abelard was staying just before his death, and where

respect. There were doubtless faults in his intellectual temper, he may or may not have been the *first* 'champion of free inquiry', but he strove for the emancipation of reason, without which *magna est veritas et praevalerebit* will never be a maxim of the possible.

From the time when Boethius (about A.D. 520) wrote his treatise on The Unity of God against the Arians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, the name into which we are baptized was all through the Middle Ages the subject of ceaseless speculation and discussion. We may deplore the fact that so sacred a theme should be the shuttlecock of logic, but once reason began to move, it would infallibly set itself problems, ontological, psychological, metaphysical, in trying to solve the mystery of God—the *highest and greatest object of thought*, the answer of both Anselm and Bernard to the question, 'What is God?' And it is not difficult to see the working of the principle of compensation: 'wisdom is justified of her children.' If theology 'received from logic a portion of its dryness and formality', it is no less true that 'logic received from theology its personality and vehemence'. Some powerful stimulus to thought was needed in the days of barbaric indifference. What likely to be so potent as the dogmas of predestination, Christ's presence in the Eucharist, and, underlying these, the being and nature of God, 'the root of all things and all thought'?

St. Bernard was neither by taste nor training qualified to take a distinguished part in the dialectics of his time. He could not speculate like Anselm, nor argue like Abelard. He hated heresies 'as foes to practical life, as disturbers of the devotion of monasteries, as hinderers of the common action of the Christian nations against the Infidels': he was no less a determined opponent of the logic of the schools; he was, however, a saint, not a doctor; and if he overcame the objects of his fiery wrath, if Abelard and Gilbert both submitted, it was not because of the fine temper of his sword or the skill with

he was first buried by the monks. His remains were afterwards removed to the oratory of the Paraclete which he founded. Heloise was prioress of the latter.

which he used it, but because he bore them down by his earnestness, his impetuosity, his reputation for holiness, and the sheer weight of his unrivalled authority.

Once more there is perhaps reason for gratitude. If St. Bernard had been differently constituted, our libraries might have been encumbered with more 'fossil folios', to the loss of his inspiring exhortations and such helpful meditations on the Godhead as he communicated to Eugenius. St. Anselm thus poured out his soul—'I do not attempt, O Lord, to penetrate Thy profundity, because in no sense can I compare it with my intellect: but I do desire to comprehend Thy truth, even though imperfectly, that truth which my heart believes and cherishes. For I seek not to comprehend in order to believe, but I believe in order to comprehend. I believe, because if I did not believe, I should never comprehend.' St. Bernard's attitude was somewhat different. It cannot be better expressed than in the words of Frederick Denison Maurice—'Bernard did not dislike Abelard mainly as a rebel against authority, but as outraging what he conceived to be the divine charity or love. Righteousness was not so much the foundation of his mind as it was of Anselm's. He was not nearly so just a man. But no writer of any age has dwelt more upon love as constituting the very being and nature of God, and as the perfection of man because he is made in the image of God. This is the characteristic feature of his mind; in it, we believe, lay the secret of his power. The idea of the Trinity was in him the idea of the absolute, all-embracing love. Any other basis of divinity he abhorred. The intellectual conceptions of Abelard were indifferent to him when they were applied to any other subject, were utterly offensive when applied to theology. The explanations which were welcomed with so much enthusiasm by Abelard's youthful hearers, were to him the dry, hard substitutes for a living truth. That which appeared to quicken and inspire them, smelt in his nostrils of the grave and the charnel-house.' Hence St. Bernard's portrait of Abelard laid before the Pope—*Ponit in coelum os suum et scrutatur alta Dei*.¹

¹ Maurice, *Mediæval Philosophy*; Lewes, *Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. ii ;

Mysticism. 'The name given to a school of thought which arose in the way of recoil from the cold and exact logic of Scholasticism in the twelfth century. Its leading idea is that perfect holiness and spiritual knowledge are to be attained by devout contemplation rather than by outward means of grace and theological study. The three stages of such perfection are defined as Purification, Illumination, and Perfect Union with God' (*Dict. of Doctrinal and Historical Theology*, p. 501). It was no novelty in St. Bernard's century; contemplative natures must have been at all times disposed towards it; the older monastic systems are said to have been characterized by it in a high degree; and the writings of the fifth century, falsely attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts xvii. 34) had great influence on the religious thought of the Middle Ages. John the Irishman was the first to combine Mysticism with Scholasticism. In his leading work, the *De Divisione Naturae*, he puts the following prayer into the mouth of the student—'God, our salvation and redemption, who hast given us nature, grant to us also grace. Manifest Thy light to us, feeling after Thee, and seeking Thee, in the shades of ignorance. Recall us from our errors. Stretch out Thy right hand to us weak ones who cannot, without Thee, come to Thee. Show Thyself to those who seek nothing besides Thee. *Break the clouds of vain phantasies which suffer not the eye of the mind to behold Thee in that way in which Thou permittest those that long to behold that face of Thine*, though it is invisible, which is their rest, the end beyond which they crave for nothing, seeing that there cannot be any good beyond it that is higher than itself.' The orthodox mystics of the twelfth century had a common aim, viz. to reconcile the claims of contemplative piety with those of scientific theology, but expressed themselves very differently. Bernard held that not argument but holiness comprehends the things of God; Hugo of St. Victor (A.D. 1097–1141) laid down the principle that 'the uncorrupted truth of things cannot be discovered by reasoning'; Richard of St. Victor, disciple of this last (d.

Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. i; Morison, *Life and Times of St. Bernard*; Church, *Life of St. Anselm*, &c., &c.

A. D. 1173) treated the faculty of mystical contemplation as superior to the imagination and the reason. Another Victorian, Walter (about A. D. 1180) gave to Abelard, Peter Lombard, Gilbert, and Peter of Poitiers the name of the *four labyrinths of France*. In the following century Bonaventura (d. A. D. 1274) rose to the full height of sublimity, or extravagance, by subordinating all human wisdom to divine illumination. He did not see—how could he, when the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the Source of all life, physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, was so little understood?—that true human wisdom *is* ‘divine illumination’. It is related that Thomas Aquinas, the ‘angelical’ doctor, on a visit to Bonaventura, whose ‘Itinerary of the mind to God’ had won for him the title of the ‘seraphic’ doctor, asked to be permitted to see the latter’s library. Bonaventura pointed to the crucifix, and said it was *there* that he had learnt all he knew. This is the ‘spirit’ of the Mystics, and a beautiful spirit it is. With the Mysticism of later periods we are not concerned.]

CHAPTER I

The things ‘above’ us, namely, God and things Divine, to which we rise by means of the Creatures

1. The former books, although they bear the title ‘On Consideration’, have very much in them relating to action, inasmuch as they teach or admonish that some things should be not only considered, but also done. But the present book will treat of Consideration only. For the things which are *above* you—and that is our topic—do not call for action, but for contemplation. It is impossible to take a part in those things which in one sense ever are, and ever will be : some of which, moreover, ever have been. And I would have you,

my dear Eugenius, wisest of men, shrewdly observe what I am going to say, namely, that your consideration goes from home as often as it turns from the things above to the visible things below, whether these have to be studied with a view to knowledge, or sought for use, or administered and performed in the discharge of duty. Still, if your consideration so engages in the things below as to seek the things above, it is not banished far. Consideration thus employed is a returning home. That is a higher and worthier use of things present, when, according to the wisdom of Paul, 'the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made.'¹ The citizens, doubtless, have no need of the ladder; exiles have, as the author of the words I have quoted himself observed; for, although he said that things invisible are clearly seen through things visible, he significantly added, 'from the created world.'² And, indeed, what need of steps for him who is already on the throne? Consideration is one of the 'creatures' of heaven, and is equipped for deeper insight into the things of heaven. It sees the Word, and in the Word the things made through the Word. It has no need to beg the knowledge of the Maker from the things which have been made. For even to gain a knowledge of these things, it does not descend to them: it sees them where they are far better seen than in themselves. Hence it is that to reach them Consideration does not seek the medium of the senses: it perceives them immediately, and is self-percipient. That is the best sort of vision when you lack nothing, when you have your heart's desire, and find contentment in yourself. Otherwise, you run some risk of

¹ Rom. i. 20.

² 'Created universe.' But the context requires a contrast between *mundus* and *coelum*. See Gifford, Sanday and Headlam, *Ep. Rom.*

seeking satisfaction elsewhere, and this is to fall beneath the standard of perfection, and enjoy less freedom.

2. And why should you want the lower things? Is it not absurd and unworthy of you? Clearly, by longing for the things below, you do some wrong to the things above: though I admit that mortal man will never be guiltless of such wrongdoing until the time come when he will have escaped into the freedom of the sons of God. For they will all then be taught of God,¹ and without the medium of any creature will be blessed in God alone. This will be a returning home, when we leave the country of our bodies and reach the realm of spirits—I mean our God, the Mighty Spirit, the great abiding place of the spirits of the blessed. There is no place here for the intrusion of sense or imagination; this realm is truth, it is wisdom, virtue, eternity, the highest good. For a while we are absent from it; our present abode is a valley, the vale of tears, where the senses have dominion, and Consideration is an exile: where the bodily sense freely and powerfully manifests itself, but the eye of the spirit is veiled in darkness. What wonder, then, if Consideration, being a foreigner, needs a native's help? And in passing through time to eternity the traveller is to be congratulated who has been able to win for himself the indispensable services of the citizens; using them, not delighting in them; compelling them, though not master of them; demanding them, not begging for them.

¹ St. John vi. 45.

CHAPTER II

The Steps of Consideration

3. He is a great man who makes it his concern to utilize the senses, spending, as it were, the wealth of the citizens in thus providing for his own salvation and the salvation of many. And he is no less a man who has made philosophy a stepping-stone to the things invisible. The only difference is that there is more pleasure in the latter, more profit in the former: the one has more happiness, the other indicates more strength. But he is the greatest of all who, scorning the use of sensible things, so far as human frailty permits, has accustomed himself, not by gradual steps, but by sudden ecstatic flights¹ to soar aloft to the glorious things on high. I suppose Paul's ecstasies² were of this last description: they were departures [from the senses], not the ascent [of the senses]; for he himself relates that he did not ascend into Paradise, but was rather caught up thither. This is what he means by saying 'If we mentally depart, it is to the glory of God'.³ Moreover, when Consideration, even in the place of its sojourning, through the pursuit of virtue, and with the help of grace, has gained the upper hand, these three results follow:—it either checks

¹ *Excessus*, literally *departures*. 'Ecstasy' is defined as 'an extraordinary state of feeling in which the mind *stands out of* or is detached from sensible things'.

² 2 Cor. xii. 4.

³ 2 Cor. v. 13. Vulg. *mente excedimus*, the reference being to the 'ecstasies' themselves, not to the criticisms of St. Paul's opponents on them. The Revised Version translates *are beside ourselves*, i.e. *are mad*. See 'Stanley on Corinthians', &c.

the senses,¹ lest they assert themselves too strongly: or draws them in, lest they go too far afield: or shuns them, lest they defile. In the first case the mark of Consideration is strength, in the second freedom, in the third purity. For such a flight of the spirit is only made with the wing of purity on the one side, and of rapture on the other.

4. You would like to know the distinguishing names of these various kinds of Consideration. Let us say, if you please, that the first is *economical*, the second *estimative*, the third *speculative*. The meaning will appear from the definitions. Consideration is 'economical'—that of the steward²—when it makes systematic use of the senses and of sensible things in daily life *so as to win the favour* of God. It is 'estimative'—that of the valuer—when it wisely and diligently searches everything, and weighs everything, *to find God*. It is 'speculative' when it retires within itself, and so far as Divine help is given, detaches itself from human affairs *in order to contemplate God*. I suppose you carefully observe that the last is the fruit of the others, and that the others, if they stand unrelated to it, may seem to be what they are called, but are not really so. And unless the first keeps the last in view, it sows much and reaps nothing; moreover, unless the second makes the last its goal, it walks, but does not walk forth. So then, what the first desires, the second scents,³ the third tastes. To this taste, however, the others also bring us, though more slowly; and there is a further difference—the first is the more toilsome road, the second the more peaceful.

¹ Literally, *sensuality*; but the context shows that the word had not its modern associations.

² *Oikonomos*, for which the Vulgate equivalent is *dispensator* in St. Luke xii. 42; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; Titus i. 7; 1 Pet. iv. 10. St. Bernard's word is *dispensativa*.

³ Reading *odoratur*.

CHAPTER III

Opinion, Faith, and Understanding

5. Enough about the way up, you say ; I have still to tell you whither you must ascend. You deceive yourself if you expect me to do that ; it transcends the power of speech. Do you think that I can utter what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and has not entered into the heart of man ?¹ ‘ God ’, the apostle says, ‘ has revealed them to us by His Spirit.’² So then the things which are above are not taught by words, they are revealed by the Spirit. But what speech does not explain let Consideration seek, prayer desire, the life merit, purity attain. At all events, when I admonish you to consider the things which are above you, do not think that I am sending you to gaze at the sun, moon, and stars ; no, not the firmament itself, nor the waters which are above the heavens. For all these things, though locally ‘ above ’, are in point of value ‘ beneath ’ you, even in dignity of nature, as they are material existences. Your portion is the spirit, whereby you in vain look for anything above you which is not spirit. Moreover, God is a Spirit, and so are the holy angels, and they are above you. But God is a Spirit in virtue of His nature, the angels are your superiors through grace. The special excellence both of yourself and of angelic beings is reason ; but in God there is no peculiar excellence ; He is altogether excellent. He, and the blessed spirits who are with Him, must in three ways, as it were along their several paths, be by our Consideration sought after—the paths of opinion, faith, and understanding. Of these, understanding depends on reason, faith on authority, while opinion

¹ Isa. lxiv. 4.² 1 Cor. ii. 10.

safeguards itself by probability only. Two of them attain to the certainty of truth, but faith possesses truth out of sight and implied, understanding has it naked and manifest; opinion, having no certainty, does not so much apprehend truth as seek it through probabilities.

6. The utmost caution must be exercised so as to avoid confusion, lest the uncertainties of opinion crystallize into articles of faith, or the foundation verities of faith become the questionable matter of opinion. And we should bear this in mind—that opinion venturing on assertion is rash; faith, if it hesitate, is weak; and understanding, if it try to break into the sealed mysteries of faith, is deemed a burglar, and a spy upon the secrets of the throne. Many have taken their own opinion for understanding, and have thus erred. And in truth opinion may be taken for understanding; understanding cannot be taken for opinion. How so? Surely because opinion may be deceived, understanding cannot be; if it could, it would not be understanding, but opinion. For true understanding has not only certain truth, but the knowledge of truth. We may thus define each of them. Faith is, by the exercise of the will, a sure foretaste of truth not yet manifested. Understanding is the sure and clear knowledge of some invisible thing. Opinion is the holding something provisionally true which you do not know to be false. So then, as I have said, faith is free from doubts; if it have doubts it is not faith, but opinion. How, then, does it differ from understanding? Inasmuch as, although there be no more uncertainty in it than there is in understanding, still it has a veil before its eyes, which is not the case with understanding. In short, if you understand a thing, further inquiry is needless; if further inquiry be necessary, you do not understand. But there is nothing we would rather know than what we already know by faith. When

the veil shall have been utterly removed from the things of which we are now assured by faith, the cup of bliss will be full.

CHAPTER IV

The Angels

7. Well now, having thus cleared the way, let us turn our consideration to our mother, Jerusalem above, and with caution and close attention, by all three ways enumerated, search out the things unsearchable, so far, I mean, as may be lawful, or rather, so far as shall be given to us. And first let us remember that the citizens of that country are spirits, mighty, glorious, blessed, separate personalities, of graduated rank, from the beginning standing in their own order, perfect of their kind, having ethereal bodies, endowed with immortality, passionless ; not so created, but so made—that is, through grace, not by nature ; beings of pure mind, benignant affections, religious and devout ; of unblemished morality ; inseparably one in heart and mind, blessed with unbroken peace, God's building, dedicated to the divine praises and service. All this we ascertain by reading, and hold by faith. But as regards their bodies, some authorities hesitate to say not only whence they are derived, but whether in any real sense they exist at all. If any one is inclined to think the derivation of these bodies a matter of opinion, I do not dispute the point. Further, if we hold that the angelic beings are endowed with understanding, this is not of faith, nor is it mere opinion ; it is a conclusion of our understanding ; for if they had not understanding, they could not be partakers of the Divine nature. There are likewise certain names, known to us by the hearing of the ear, by means of which the duties, merits, ranks, orders, of these blessed ones,

things only faintly heard by mortal ear, in one way or another may be conjectured and distinguished. But, in truth, what does not come by hearing is not of faith, for faith cometh by hearing.¹ And so we may speak conjecturally of these topics. For what is the good of our knowing the names of the celestial beings if we may not, without prejudice to faith, form some opinion as to the things the names denote? Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim—these are the names. What do they signify? Is there no difference between those spirits who are simply called Angels and those who are called Archangels?

8. What, then, is the meaning of this difference in degree? Let us suppose (unless your consideration has showed you something better) that they are called Angels who are believed to have been given as guardians of individual men, sent to minister, as Paul teaches,² on behalf of those who are the heirs of salvation; it was of these the Saviour said, 'Their angels do always behold the face of your Father.'³ Let us suppose that over these are the Archangels, who, admitted to a knowledge of the Divine secrets, are not sent except for particular and very weighty reasons. From among these the great Archangel Gabriel was, as we read, sent to Mary,⁴ and for the greatest of all reasons. Let us suppose that above these are the Virtues, by whose command or operation signs and wonders wrought in the elements, or through the elements, appear for the warning of mortal men. Perhaps this explains why it is that after reading in the Gospels,⁵ 'There shall be

¹ Rom. x. 17.

² Heb. i. 14. St. Bernard assumes St. Paul to be the author of the Epistle.

³ St. Matt. xviii. 10.

⁴ St. Luke i. 26.

⁵ St. Luke xxi. 25.

signs in the sun, and the moon, and the stars,' a little farther on you have, 'for the Virtues of the heavens shall be moved':¹ the spirits, no doubt, through whom the signs are wrought. Let us suppose that the Powers are their superiors, and that by their vigour the power of darkness is checked, and the malignant spirits of this lower air are restrained, that they may not do harm to their full intent: that they may not be able to show their malignity, except for beneficial ends. Let us suppose that the Principalities are also preferred to these last, and that by their regulating wisdom all sovereignty upon earth is established, ruled, limited, transferred, curtailed, changed. Let us suppose that the Dominions tower above the aforesaid orders to such a height that in comparison of these all the rest appear to be administrative spirits, and that to the Dominions, as it were to their masters, the Principalities account for their commands, the Powers for their defences, the Virtues for their operations, the Archangels for their revelations, the Angels for their care and foresight. Let us suppose that the Thrones have winged their flight far away beyond even the Dominions, that they are called Thrones because they sit on thrones, and that they therefore sit because God is seated in them. For He could not be seated in those who were not themselves seated. Do you ask what I mean by that sitting? The deepest tranquillity, the utmost calmness and serenity, the peace which passes all understanding. Such is the Lord of Hosts, who sitteth in the Thrones, tranquilly judging all things, perfectly calm, serene, peaceful. And such He made the Thrones, most like Himself. Let

¹ The corresponding Greek word elsewhere (Rom. viii. 38, 1 Pet. iii, 22) denotes the angels, but in this passage and the parallel passage in St. Matt. it probably denotes the greater heavenly bodies, the ruling lights. See Alford, &c.

us suppose the Cherubim to drink at the very fount of wisdom, the mouth of the Most High, and in turn to pour forth the streams of knowledge for all their fellow citizens. May not this be the 'rushing river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God,'¹ of which the prophet spake? Let us suppose the Seraphim to be spirits inflamed with the Divine fire, kindling all things, so that the citizens may be each a burning and a shining lamp, burning with charity, shining with knowledge.

9. How good it is, Eugenius, for us to be here! But how much better will it be if we ever altogether follow on whither we have in part gone before! Our hearts lead the way, but not our whole hearts; only a part, and too often a small part. While our affections are weighed down by the bodily tabernacle, and our desires cleave to the mire, contemplation, thin and spiritless, is left to wing its flight all alone. And yet out of the depths of its poverty it will cry, 'O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thine house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.'² But suppose the soul were to collect itself, and the affections were brought back from all places wheresoever they are kept captive, through fearing what they ought not, loving what they should not, sorrowing in vain, rejoicing still more in vain. Suppose the soul, I say, accompanied by these affections and possessed of full freedom, were to wing its vigorous unimpeded flight, satisfied, as it were, with the marrow and fatness of grace; once it begins to travel round the abodes of light, and more intently gaze upon Abraham's dear bosom, and see 'beneath the altar', whatever that may mean, the souls of the martyrs with utmost patience waiting in their first robe to be clothed with the second, will it not then much more earnestly say with the prophet, 'One thing have I asked of the Lord,

¹ Ps. xlv. 4.

² Ps. xxvi. 8.

that will I seek after : that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit His temple ' ? ¹ What prevents the heart of God being there revealed ? Why should it not there be proved what is ' the will of God, the good, acceptable, and perfect will ' ? ²—good in itself, pleasing in its effects, acceptable to those who have fruition of it, perfect to the perfect who seek nothing beyond it. Bowels of mercy are disclosed, thoughts of peace, the riches of salvation, the mysteries of the good will, secrets of loving-kindness, which, shut out from mortal ken, are only guessed at even by the elect. But even in this there is something salutary : men might otherwise cease to fear before they are found fit to worthily love.

10. In the heavenly beings who are called Seraphim we may discern how He loves who has no cause to love, and who also hates nothing that He has made ; how He cherishes those whom He has made for salvation, teaches them to go, ³ embraces them, how the fire of His love consumes the sins of His elect youth, and the chaff of their ignorances, thoroughly purifying them for Himself, and making them most worthy of His love. In the Cherubim, who have a name for fullness of knowledge, we may perceive that the Lord is a God of knowledge, who only knoweth all things, and in Him is no ignorance at all ; who is altogether light, and in Him is no darkness at all ; ⁴ who is all eye, and who cannot possibly be deceived, because that eye is never closed ; who seeks not outside Himself for light which He may approach that He may see, for He sees in the light of His own Being. In the Thrones we may behold how the Judge, trusted by all that is innocent, sits in them ; He who will not deceive, and cannot

¹ Ps. xxvii. 4.

² Rom. xii. 2.

³ Hos. xi. 3, Exod. xix. 4, &c.

⁴ 1 John, i. 5.

be deceived, inasmuch as He loves, as has been said, and sees, as has been said. Nor is this His 'sitting' without significance; it indicates tranquillity. May my sentence go forth from such a presence¹ where love is found, but no error, no confusion! In the Dominions we may see how majestic is the Lord, who at His pleasure establishes His empire, that empire which is as wide as the universe and shall endure for ever. In the Principalities we may perceive the fount of all things; as a door turns on its hinge, so the universe depends on the King Himself. In the Powers we may see how powerfully the First Cause protects those over whom He rules, keeping off and driving back the hostile powers. In the Virtues we may see everywhere equally present that one Virtue through which are all things, life-giving, active, invisible, unmovable, yet moving all things for beneficial ends, and holding them in its grasp. When this Virtue breaks forth into effects less familiar amongst men, we hear of miracles or prodigies. Lastly, as we contemplate the Angels and Archangels, we may see, and marvel, how true it is in our experience that 'He careth for us';² He who never ceases to delight us with the visits of such glorious beings, to instruct us with their revelations, admonish us through their suggestions, solace us by their zealous attention.

CHAPTER V

God is the Source of Angelic Gifts and Graces

11. All these gifts and graces were bestowed on these spirits by their Creator, one and the self-same Spirit dividing

¹ Ps. xvii. 2.

² 1 Pet. v. 7.

to them severally as He willed. It is He who worketh them in His creatures, it is He who has given to His creatures the power of working them, but in different ways. The Seraphim burn, but with the fire of God, or rather with fire for God. Their chief characteristic is their love, but they love not as much, nor in the same way, as God. The Cherubim shine, and excel in knowledge, but by participation in the truth; and accordingly they know not as the Truth knows, nor as much. The Thrones sit, but by the favour of Him who sitteth in them. They also tranquilly judge, but not so fully, nor in the same way, as the Peace that giveth peace, the Peace which passes all understanding. The Dominions rule, but they rule in subjection to a ruler, and serve Him as well. What is this in comparison with the supreme, everlasting, unparalleled dominion? The Principalities lead and govern; but they themselves are governed: so that they would no longer know how to govern, if they ceased to be governed. In the Powers there is surpassing strength; but He to whom they owe their strength has more strength, and of a different kind: He is not so much strong, as strength itself. The Virtues, in accordance with their ministry and their might, are busy rousing the sluggish hearts of men by the novelty of signs; but it is Virtue itself, immanent in them, that does the works. They also do them, but in comparison with that doing they do them not. In short, so great is the difference that the prophet says to Him, as standing apart from all others, 'Thou art God who doest wondrous things,'¹ and also concerning Him, 'Who alone doeth great and marvellous things.'² Angels and Archangels are with us, but He is more our own who is not only with us but in us.

12. But if you say that an Angel may also be in us, I do

¹ Ps. lxxvii. 14.

² Ps. cxxxvi. 4.

not deny it. I remember that it is written, 'The Angel who spake in me.'¹ And yet there is a difference even here. The Angel is in us suggesting what is good, not bestowing it: stimulating us to goodness, not creating goodness. God is so in us as to give the grace, and infuse it into us; or rather, so in us that He Himself is infused and partaken of, so that one need not fear to say that He is one with our spirit, although He be not one with our person, nor one with our substance.² For you know, 'He that is joined unto God is one spirit.'³ The Angel, therefore, is with the soul, God is in the soul. The Angel is in the soul as a comrade, God as life. It follows that as the soul sees in the eyes, hears in the ears, smells in the nostrils, tastes in the palate, has the sense of touch in all the rest of the body, so God worketh different effects in different spirits: for instance, in some He manifests Himself as love, in others as perception, in others as action of various kinds, according as the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.⁴ What are we to think of Him who is so common a topic of our speech, but who is so far removed from us in reality?

¹ Zech. i. 14.

² It should be remembered that Pantheism was prevalent all through the Middle Ages, and that it was not confined to individual thinkers, but was adopted by considerable communities (see Flint, *Anti-theistic Theories*, p. 357). St. Bernard may have had in mind the teaching of John Scotus, who regarded the Deity as the 'substance' of all things. He affirmed the 'doctrine of the descent of the Triune God into finite things, not only with reference to the single instance of the Incarnation, but with reference to all created things or existences. Our life is God's life in us . . . The knowledge which angels and men have of God is God's revelation of Himself in them.' (Uebërweg, *Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. i, pp. 362-3). How far St. Bernard agreed with this, and how far he differed from it, is clear.

³ 1 Cor. vi. 17.

⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 7.

How is it that He whom we describe with mortal words hides Himself in the depths of His own Majesty, and altogether shuns our human forms¹ and affections? Hear what He says to men, 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.'² We are said to love, so is God: we are said to know, so is God: and much to the same purpose. But God loves like Charity, knows like Truth, sits in judgement like Equity, rules like Majesty, governs like Authority, guards like Safety, works like Virtue, reveals like Light, stands by us like Affection. All these things the Angels also do, and so do we, but in a far inferior way, not, of course, by our native goodness, but by the goodness whereof we partake.

CHAPTER VI

The Eternal Self-existence of God

12. Now, then, let us pass from these spirits, if haply you too may be able to say with the spouse, 'It was but a little I passed from them when I found him whom my soul loveth.'³ Do you ask, 'What is His name?' That is surely not a better question than 'What is His character?' The answer which God wished to be given respecting Himself, the answer which He Himself taught Moses, and which Moses at God's command told the people was—'I am what I am; He who is hath sent me unto you'.⁴ Fitly was this answer given. Nothing could better describe eternity, and God is eternal. If you say that God is good, great, blessed, wise,

¹ *Aspectus*.³ Cant. iii. 4.² Isa. lv. 9.⁴ Exod. iii. 14. Vulg.

or any such thing, the starting-point is this—*God is*. Of course, the very meaning of God's existing is that all these attributes constitute existence. If you add a hundred others you have not got away from the fact of His existence. By naming them you have not added anything; if you do not name them, you have not diminished aught. If you now perceive the nature of this unparalleled, unique, supreme existence, will you not agree that in comparison thereof whatever is not included therein may more accurately be said not to exist than to exist? Do we ask further, 'What is God?' We reply, 'That without which nothing is.' We say nothing can exist without Him, just as He Himself cannot exist without Himself. He is self-existent. He is existence to all else. And so, in a certain sense, He is alone, who is the source of His own existence, and of the existence of all beside. What is God? The Beginning,¹ as He Himself replied concerning Himself. In the world of sense many things are called *beginnings*, but in respect of things that come after. If, instead of looking forwards you look backwards, you will allow Him to be the beginning of all. Wherefore, if you wish to find the true, unconditioned 'beginning', you must discover that which has no beginning. That from which all began could not possibly have had a beginning. For if it had, there must of necessity have been some source from which it sprang, since nothing is self-originating. If it be imagined that the non-existent² could give itself a beginning, or that something may be before it is, I reply that both these alterna-

¹ St. John viii. 25. The later Latin text, *Principium, quia et loquor vobis*, is what St. Bernard has in mind. See Westcott's supplementary note on this very difficult passage.

² 'Non-existent' in the sense of that which has absolutely no being, or mere privation. St. Bernard was familiar with other meanings, philosophical and religious, of the 'non-existent'.

tives are contrary to reason, and it clearly follows that nothing was its own beginning. Moreover, whatever had not its beginning from itself was not the first beginning. The true beginning, therefore, by no means began, but was altogether the fount of its own being.

14. What is God? He for whom the ages have neither come nor gone, and yet with whom they are not co-eternal. What is God? He '*from* whom are all things, *through* whom are all things, *in* whom are all things'.¹ 'From whom', by creation, not by propagation.² 'Through whom', lest you should suppose there is some other author and some other maker. 'In whom', not locally, but potentially. 'From whom', as the one beginning, the one author of all. 'Through whom', lest some other beginning be brought in as the originator. 'In whom', lest a third term, *place*, be introduced. 'From whom', not as though God were the matter of which things are made; He is the efficient, not the material cause. In vain do philosophers look to matter to solve the difficulty; God has no need of matter. For He did not seek a workshop, nor an artificer. He, through Himself, in Himself, made all things. Whence? Out of nothing; for if He made them out of anything, He did not make *that*, and therefore did not make all things. God forbid that out of His own incorrupt and incorruptible substance He should be thought to have made so many things that are doubtless good, but are nevertheless corruptible. You ask, 'If all things are in God, where is God Himself?' Still, I find no place which can contain Him. You ask where He is not? I cannot tell this either. What place is without

¹ Rom. xi. 36.

² *Seminabiliter*. Not as the human race from Adam, or the plant from the seed.

God? God is incomprehensible;¹ but you have apprehended not a little if you have ascertained this much about Him, that He is nowhere who is not enclosed by space, and that He is everywhere who is not shut out by space. In His own sublime and incomprehensible way, as all things are in Him, so He is in all things. In a word, as the Evangelist says, 'He was in the world.'² But in a different way He is there, where He was before the world was made. You must not ask where He was; except Himself there was nothing. Therefore He was in Himself.

CHAPTER VII

The Divine Trinity in Unity

15. What is God? The best object of thought.³ If you approve, you ought not to countenance the belief that there is something which is the *essence* of Godhead, and yet is not God.⁴ If there were, it would doubtless be better than God. Must it not of necessity be better than God if it is not God,

¹ In modern English, omnipresent. 'Incomprehensible' appears to be used here as it is in the Creed, and expresses 'that which cannot be grasped by, or contained within, any space'. St. Bernard's word is not, however, *immensus*, but *incomprehensibilis*. A little lower down the word is used in the sense 'inconceivable', 'beyond the grasp of the mind.'

² St. John i, 10.

³ So St. Anselm nearly—'the greatest object or being that can be conceived'.

⁴ Gilbert, Bishop of Poitiers, whom St. Bernard opposed at the Council of Paris, A. D. 1147, and in the following year at the Council of Rheims, distinguished the divine essence from the Deity, the properties of the three divine Persons from the Persons themselves, not in reality, but by abstraction. It is this distinction between *Deus* and *divinitas* which St. Bernard condemns. Mosheim, iii. p. 79; Ueberweg, *Hist. Philosophy*, i. p. 399.

but constitutes His being? But it is wiser for us to confess that the divinity which men say is the essence of God is the same as God. Unless it be God it cannot be in God. 'What', say our opponents, 'do you deny that God has divinity?' No; but what God has, that He is. 'Do you deny that God exists in virtue of His divinity?' No; but we say that He exists in virtue of no other divinity than that which He Himself is. If you have discovered some other divinity, I fall back upon the doctrine of the Tri-une God, and stiffen my back against your new-found 'divinity'. You may divide the world into four quarters if you please: you must not so map out the Godhead. God is a Trinity: God is each of the three Persons. If you like to add a fourth divinity, I have already fully convinced myself that no divinity which is not God ought to be worshipped. I suppose you think so too: for 'thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve'.¹ That is truly a glorious divinity which dare not claim for itself divine honours. But we do better in rejecting the fourth term altogether than in receiving it without due honour. We say that there are many things in God—it is sound Catholic doctrine—but the many are but one. Otherwise, if we regard them as individually distinct, we have God not only fourfold, but a hundredfold. For example, we speak of His greatness, goodness, justice, and innumerable other attributes; but unless you consider them all as one in God, and with God, you will have a manifold God.

16. It is not difficult for me to frame a better idea of God than this of yours. 'What is your view?' you say. I regard God as absolute simplicity.² A sound judgement prefers

¹ St. Matt. iv. 10, St. Luke iv. 8.

² In the sense of *singleness*. 'The supreme unity', 'the simplest unity of all,' are perhaps equivalent phrases.

simplicity of nature to that which is manifold. I know the usual answer to this. 'We maintain', say they, 'that the many attributes do not constitute the being of God, but only one divinity composed of them all.' You assert, then, that although God is not manifold, He is twofold, and you have not reached the highest conception of God as absolute simplicity. That is as far from being simple which involves even one form,¹ as she is no longer a virgin who is known to even one man. I speak freely; even a twofold God shall not be my God: I have a better one. Suppose I do prefer a twofold Divine Being to a God multitudinous and manifold; I nevertheless utterly despise such a God in comparison with a God of a 'simple' nature. My God is none other than what He is in the catholic sense. We must not institute a comparison between what He includes and excludes. He is what He is. We are not told all that He is. He is pure spirit, simple, complete in Himself, self-consistent, adding nothing to Himself from time, place, material things, losing nothing of Himself in them; incapable of numerical division, and not composed of several parts to make a collective whole. For He is a unit, not a union. He has no corporeal parts like our bodies; no different affections, like our souls; He is not susceptible of many 'forms', like all creation; nor does He assume even

¹ In the philosophy of Aristotle the principle of *form* or *essence* was the substitute for the Platonic idea. Form may be defined as 'that which exists in itself and for itself'. Combined with matter it constitutes individual existences, the 'form' of the thing being the actual nature it possesses. God was regarded as pure form without matter, the immaterial and eternal form, the pure Actuality in which is no potentiality, the self-thinking Reason, or absolute Spirit. 'Form' is also regarded as equivalent to *species*, a substantial part of the *genus*, or the substantial unity of the individuals included in the species, and sometimes as the *differentia*, by the addition of which the *materia* becomes a species. See Ueberweg, *Hist. of Phil.*, &c.

one form, as our opponents conceive of 'form'. Surely God is greatly to be praised for that He is content with one 'form', so that He may exempt Himself from all deformity. This is equivalent to saying that the nature of all else is conditioned in many ways, but that God's nature is absolute. What? Will He, through whose goodness all things exist, stoop for His being to the goodness of another? That praise, to use a common expression, means blasphemy. Is it not higher excellence to need nothing than to need one thing? Have reverence for God, so that you may give Him the best. If your heart has been able to rise to this level, how will you place your God lower down? He is His own 'form',¹ His own essence. For a while I look up to Him at this elevation; if a higher rank were revealed to me, I would rather give it to Him. We surely need not fear that thought will soar above Him. However high it may attain, He is still beyond. To look for the Most High beneath the summit of man's thought is absurd; to place Him there is impious. He must be sought beyond it, not on this side of it.

17. Ascend thus far if you can; lift up your heart, and God will be exalted. God is not dependent on form. He is pure form.² God is not a feeling, He is a state of feeling; He is not compound, but absolute simplicity; and you know full well what I mean by 'simplicity': the word is synony-

¹ It must be borne in mind that Gilbert, St. Bernard's antagonist, advanced the doctrine of *native forms*. John of Salisbury thus sums up the doctrine—*est autem forma nativa originalis exemplum, et quae non in mente Dei consistit, sed rebus creatis inhaeret*. It was related to the 'idea' in the mind of God as the *exemplum* to the *exemplar*. 'In sensible or natural things form and matter are united: the forms do not exist as *native forms* apart from things, but with them. In God, who is pure form without matter, the archetypes of material things (*corporum exemplaria*) exist as eternal, immaterial forms.'

² See note above.

mous with unity. In proportion as God is one, He is simple. Now He is one in such a sense as nothing else is. If the phrase be permissible, He is most of all one.¹ There is one sun as no other can be ; one moon also, as no other can be. So it is with God, but more so. How ' more so ' ? He is one even to Himself. Would you like a little light upon this ? He is always the same, and never changes. It is not so with the one sun, or the one moon. Both proclaim that they are not one to themselves, the sun because of its movements, the moon on account of her phases. But God is not only one *to* Himself, He is also one *in* Himself. He has nothing in Himself but Himself. He knows no change through time, no difference in His substance. Hence the saying of Boethius² concerning Him—' This is the true unity which is indivisible, and admits nothing foreign to itself. Nor can this unity be reduced to " forms ", for it is pure form.'³ Compare with this unity all that can be called unity ; God's unity will not be found there. Yet God is Three in One. What follows ? Do we upset what has been said about the Unity by bringing in the thought of the Trinity ? No ; but we establish the Unity. We speak of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ; still we maintain there are not three Gods, but one God. What, if I may so speak, is the meaning of this number which is not a number ?

If there are three particulars, must there not be numerical distinction ? If there is but one, what becomes of the enumeration ? But I have, you say, something that can be numbered, and yet not numbered. There is one substance, there are

¹ *Unissimus*.

² The famous Latin philosopher and statesman, beheaded A. D. 526 for opposing Arianism. The passage is to be found in the Basle Edition of his works (1570), p. 1122.

³ That is, *does not allow of division into species*. See above.

three Persons. Is there anything strange or obscure in this? Nothing, if the persons are conceived of separately from the Substance. The truth is that, inasmuch as the three Persons are one Substance, and the one Substance is the three Persons, there is no denying that we do number them, for they are really three; yet on the other hand we do not number them, for they are really one. If, again, you think an easy explanation is found by calling them three, tell me what it is you have numbered. Natures? There is one nature. Essences? There is one essence. Substances? There is one substance. Godheads? There is one Godhead. 'I do not number these', you say, 'but the Persons, and they are not that one nature, that one essence, that one substance, that one divinity.' You are a Catholic; you are not in the least likely to make such a concession.

CHAPTER VIII

The plurality of Persons in the Godhead, and their several 'properties'. The unity and simplicity of the Essence

18. The Catholic Faith confesses that the 'properties' of the Persons are identical with the Persons themselves; and that the Persons themselves are nothing else than one God, one Divine Substance, one Divine Nature, one Divine and Supreme Majesty. Number, therefore, if you can, either the Persons without the Substance, which they themselves are, or the characteristics without the Persons with whom they are identical. Or, if any one endeavour to separate the Persons from the Substance, or the characteristic attributes from the Per-

sons, I am at a loss to understand how he can profess to be a worshipper of the Trinity after dividing the Godhead into such a vast multitude of particulars. Let us therefore maintain that there are three Persons, but not to the prejudice of the Unity : let us hold that there is one God, but not so as to confound the Trinity ; for these are not mere names, nor idle words void of meaning. If any one asks how this can be, let him be content to hold that it is so, though I must add that if the doctrine be not clear to reason, it is no halting opinion, but the firm conviction of faith. This is a great mystery, worthy of all veneration, not to be keenly scrutinized. How can plurality consist with unity, or unity with plurality ? To closely examine the fact is rashness, to believe it is piety, to know it is life, and eternal life. Wherefore, Eugenius, if you think it worth while, let me have your undivided consideration as I run through the many arguments which tend to show the greatness of this unique unity. There is a unity which we may call 'collective', as, for example, when many stones make one heap. There is a 'constitutive' unity, as when many members make one body, or many parts constitute one whole. There is a unity such as that of man and wife, whereby two are no longer two, but one flesh. And there is a 'natural' unity, whereby soul and body are one man. There is a 'potential' unity, the realization of which is the constant endeavour of a virtuous man, so that he may not be unstable, nor unlike himself. There is the unity of agreement, when the love of many men leads to their being of one heart and one soul. There is also the unity of devotion, when the soul, cleaving to God with complete surrender, is one spirit. And there is the unity of condescension, whereby our poor nature was taken by the Word of God to make one person in Himself.

19. But what are all these compared with that supreme, and,

so to speak, unique unity which results from the consubstantiality of the three Persons? If you find a likeness between any one of the foregoing and this unity, the resemblance is but partial; if you compare them with it, there will be no true resemblance. Therefore, among all things which are rightly called 'One', the unity of the Trinity, whereby three Persons are one Substance, is the highest. Next comes that surpassing unity, whereby, conversely, three substances are in Christ, one Person. Moreover, real sober consideration proves that the foregoing, and whatsoever else can be called 'One', have the title in virtue of their resemblance to that supreme Unity, not because they allow of comparison therewith. Nor do we forsake this profession of the Unity by our upholding of the doctrine of the three Persons, since, when we speak of the Trinity, we do not mean a multiplicity of gods any more than in speaking of unity we imply loneliness. Wherefore, when I speak of *One* I am not disturbed by the consideration of number, which does not multiply the essence, nor change it, nor divide it. Again, when I speak of *three* things, if I view them as one, whatever the three things may be, I am not proved wrong. Nor, if I speak of the three Persons of the Godhead, am I obliged to confound the Persons, or reduce the three to the One.

CHAPTER IX

As in God there are three Persons and one Nature: so in Christ there are two Natures and one Person

20. My views, I confess, are similar respecting the unity which I have ranked next in honour to that which is unique.

I say that in Christ the Word, the human soul and body, are without confusion of the essences one Person, and I further maintain that the human and divine remain numerically distinct without prejudice to the unity of person. Nor would I deny that this unity is of the same class as that unity whereby soul and body are one man. It was fitting that a mystery devised for man's welfare should have a more intimate relation to man's nature and more closely resemble it. It was fitting, too, that it should harmonize with that highest unity which is in God and is God, so that as three Persons in the Trinity are one Essence, so in the Incarnation, by a most appropriate contrast, the three Essences are one Person. Do you not see how beautifully the unity of Christ is set between the unity of God and the unity of man? I mean, of course, the unity of the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Most beautiful, most appropriate, I say, that the mystery of salvation should so fitly correspond to both, to God our Saviour on the one side, to saved humanity on the other. Thus this unity of the two natures, standing between the other two unities, must be pronounced inferior to the one and superior to the other, being as much above the lower as it is below the higher.

21. In a word, so closely and so clearly are the natures united in the Person of the one Christ, who is God and Man, that you can without error in speaking of them use either mode of expression, and with the true Catholic Faith¹ declare both that God was man and man was God. But you cannot, without sheer absurdity, similarly assert either that the soul is the body, or the body the soul, although in like manner soul and body is one man. And it is not surprising if the soul, with all

¹ So Hooker on the *Communicatio idiomatum*, Ecc. Pol., Bk v. liii.

its vital energy, considerable though it is, and notwithstanding its affections, cannot so closely bind the body to itself as the Divinity united to itself that man who was predestined to be the Son of God with power.¹ The divine predestination is a long and strong chain for binding close: for it reaches from the Eternal. What is longer than eternity? What more mighty than Deity? Hence it is that this unity could not possibly be severed by death, although soul and body were separated from one another. And perhaps John felt this when he professed himself unworthy to undo the latchet of His shoe.²

CHAPTER X

The Parable of the three Measures of Meal

22. We remember the three measures in the Gospel, which were mixed and leavened to make one loaf.³ If any one were to apply the parable to the mystery of the Incarnation I should think he was not far wrong in so doing. How well the woman leavened them! And so, in the parallel, without dividing the body and soul, the Word was distinct from the

¹ Rom. i. 4.

² St. Mark i. 7. In the mystical theology the 'shoe' was taken to denote the humanity of Christ, which the Baptist confessed himself unworthy 'to serve, bear upon his shoulder, or carry in his hands'. 'Unde S. Bernardus: *Calceo, ait, humanitatis nostrae calceata fuit Verbi maiestas; quia enim calceamenta in extrema corporis parte sunt, et ex mortuis fiunt animalibus, idcirco iuxta S. Gregorium et S. Hieronymum in Marci cap. i. 7 recte significant incarnationem Christi, quam se explicare non posse, nec ad hoc dignum esse hîc confitetur S. Ioannes.*' A Lapide, *Comm. on St. Matt.* iii. 11.

³ St. Matt. xiii. 33, St. Luke xiii. 21.

body and soul, yet so that in the separation the inseparable union was maintained. For the partial separation is no objection against the unity which remained between all three. Whether two of the three were conjoined or dissevered, the personal unity none the less continued in all three. The one Christ and one Person, the Word, soul and body, remained just the same even after the death of the man Christ Jesus. In my opinion this mingling and leavening took place in the Virgin's womb; she was the woman who mixed and leavened the three measures. For I should not, perhaps, err greatly in saying that the leaven was Mary's faith. She was clearly blessed in believing, since the things which were told her by the Lord were accomplished in her.¹ But they would not have been accomplished if anything had hindered the whole from being leavened, and continually leavened, according to the word of the Lord, so as to preserve for us, as well in His death as in His life, the one perfect Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus in union with His own Godhead.

23. In this admirable mystery, corresponding to the number of the measures, we may observe, most beautifully distinguished, the three steps of the new, the old, and the eternal. By the 'new' I mean the *soul*, which is believed to be created out of nothing when it is infused into the body; by the 'old', the *flesh*, which we know to have been transmitted even from Adam, the first of human kind; by the 'eternal', I mean the Word, whom, as a certain truth, we assert to be co-eternal with the Father, and to be begotten of Him. And in the foregoing, if you carefully notice, there is a triple exhibition of Divine power, inasmuch as there was something made out of nothing, the new out of the old, the eternally blessed out of that which was sentenced to death. How does this

¹ St. Luke i. 45.

concern our salvation? Much every way. Firstly, because, reduced to nothing through sin, we are through the mystery as it were created anew, that we may be a sort of first fruits of His creatures.¹ Secondly, because, translated from our old slavery into the liberty of the children of God, we walk in newness of the spirit. Lastly, because we have been called from the power of darkness to the kingdom of the eternal glory, wherein He has already made us to sit with Him in Christ. May they be no friends of ours who endeavour to estrange from us the flesh of Christ, impiously asserting that it was newly created in the Virgin, not taken from the Virgin. Well did the Spirit of Prophecy long before meet this opinion, or rather blasphemy of wicked men, when He said, 'A shoot shall spring from the root of Jesse, and a flower out of his root.'² He might have said that the flower should come from the shoot, but He preferred to say 'from the root', that He might show the flower and the shoot to have the same origin. So we see that the flesh was taken thence whence the Virgin sprang; it was not newly created in the Virgin, but came from the root.

CHAPTER XI

The consideration of God continued

24. I suspect you are a little vexed at my again asking, What is God? The question has already been asked so often, and you are doubtful whether the answer will ever be found. Dear Eugenius, Father in God, what I say is this—He alone is God who never can be sought in vain, not even

¹ James i. 18.

² Isa. xi. 1.

when He cannot be found. Your experience may teach you this; or, if not, believe one who has had the experience; I do not mean myself, but the saint who says, 'Thou art good, O Lord, to them that hope in Thee, to the soul that seeketh Thee.'¹ What, then, is God? As regards the universe, He is the final end; in respect of election, He is salvation; as regards Himself, He is self-knowledge. What is God? He is almighty will moved by loving-kindness, virtue, eternal light, incommunicable reason, highest blessedness; He is the creator of minds to enjoy Himself; He endows them with life to perceive Him, disposes them to long for Him, enlarges them to receive Him, justifies them to be worthy of Him, fires them with zeal, fertilizes them that they may bear fruit, guides them into sweet reasonableness, moulds them to loving-kindness, regulates them for wisdom, strengthens them for virtue, visits them for consolation, illuminates them for knowledge, preserves them for immortality, fills them for happiness, is about their path for safety.

CHAPTER XII

*God the rewarder of the good, and the righteous
judge of the wicked*

25. What is God? No less the punishment of the perverse than the glory of the humble. We may say He is reason and sweet reasonableness directing itself with fixed unchanging aim, and everywhere operative. Any perversity in collision with *that* must of necessity be confounded. Of course, all swelling pride and unseemliness which dashes itself against that must be broken to shivers. Woe to all creation if

¹ Lam. iii. 25.

it chance to get in the way of unbending righteousness! for that righteousness is strength. There is no more deadly foe of wills wickedly disposed than to be for ever attempting, ever in conflict, and all in vain.

Woe to wills opposed! Surely they only bring upon themselves the penalty of their own reluctance. What penalty is so severe as to be ever choosing what shall never be, ever refusing what shall never cease to be? Is there any hell like a will under this necessity of choosing and refusing, so that whichever way it moves misery must be as constant an attendant as perversity? As long as eternity shall last it will not get its choice; and what it refuses it shall no less through eternity endure. And such a will meets with its due deserts; he who is never disposed for what becomes him, should never attain to what delights him. Who doth this? The righteous Lord our God, who with the perverse also shows Himself perverse. Straight and crooked can never agree, for these are contrary one to the other, though they do not injure one another. One of the two is injured; it cannot be God. 'It is hard for thee', He says, 'to kick against the goad':¹ that is, not hard for the goad, but hard for him who kicks. God is also the punishment of the base, for He is light; and what is so hateful to filthy and degraded minds? Surely, 'Every one that doeth evil hateth the light.'² But I say, will they not be able to shun the light? Not in the least. It shines everywhere, though not to all. In a word, it shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehends it not.³ The light sees the darkness, for with it seeing and shining are the same thing; but it is not in turn seen by the darkness, because the darkness comprehends it not. They, then, are seen that they may be confounded; and they do not

¹ Acts ix. 5.

² St. John iii. 20.

³ St. John i. 5.

see that they may not be consoled. Nor are they seen only by the light; they are also seen in the light. By what person or persons? By every one who sees, so that the greater the number of beholders the greater may be their confusion. But out of the whole multitude of the spectators there is no eye more troublesome to a man than his own. There is no glance, whether in heaven or on earth, which a benighted conscience would rather escape, or is less capable of escaping. The darkness is not hidden even from itself; though it sees naught else, it sees itself. The works of darkness follow it, and there is no hiding-place from it, not even in the darkness. This is 'the worm that dieth not'¹—the memory of the past. Once it gets within, or rather is born within through sin, there it stays, and never by any means can be plucked out. It never ceases to gnaw the conscience; feeding on it as on food that never can be consumed it prolongs the life of misery. I shudder as I contemplate this biting worm, this never-dying death. I shudder at the thought of being the victim of this living death, this dying life.

26. This is the second death, which never kills, but is always killing. Will no one grant them to die once for all that they may not evermore be dying? They who say to the mountains, 'Fall on us, and to the hills, cover us,'² what do they desire but to put an end to death by the kindness of death, or to escape from it? In short, they will call upon death, and death will not come.³ I would have you see this clearly. It is certain that the soul is immortal, and so long as it has life it must have memory; for otherwise it might some day cease to be the soul. So then, while the soul lasts, memory also lasts. But what is memory like? It is

¹ Isa. lxvi. 24; St. Mark ix. 48.

² St. Luke xxiii. 30.

³ Apoc. ix. 6.

burdened with foul disgrace, horrid crimes, swelling vanity ; through scorning (the better part) it is like a field rough and neglected. These former things have passed away, and have not passed away. They are out of hand, but not out of mind. What has been done cannot be undone ; the doing was in time, but the effect of the doing will be eternal. That does not pass with time which passes all times. The wrong-doing that you remember for ever must therefore for ever be a torment. This will be to realize the truth of the words, 'I will reprove thee and set before thine eyes what thou hast done.'¹ It is the Lord who thus spoke ; all that opposes Him must of necessity oppose itself ; so that at last there will be the complaint, 'O thou watcher of men, why hast thou set me as a mark for thee, so that I am a burden to myself?''² These are the facts, Eugenius. Nothing can contradict God and be consistent with itself ; on the contrary, whosoever shall be reproved by God shall be reproved also by himself. When the soul is torn from the body, and stands self-centred, it will be no longer possible for reason to disguise the truth, or for the soul to shun the searching insight of reason. How can it do so when the senses, by means of which, as we know, it was wont to sally forth to gratify its curiosity, and, leaving itself, would find a home in that fashion of the world which passeth away, are sealed up in the slumber of death ? Do you see that nothing is wanting to complete the confusion of the filthy when they shall be brought forth as a spectacle to God, to angels, to men, to themselves ? How lamentable is the lot of all bad men, who must undoubtedly face this torrent of simple equity, and stand exposed to the light of unveiled truth ! Is not this to be for ever beaten, and to be for ever con-

¹ Ps. l. 21.² Job vii. 20.

founded? 'Break them with a double breach, O Lord our God',¹ saith the prophet.

CHAPTER XIII

The mystical interpretation of the length and breadth, and height, and depth

27. What is God? Length, breadth, height, and depth. 'What?' you say. 'You do, after all, profess to believe in the fourfold Godhead which was an abomination to you.'

Not in the least. I abominated, and still abominate it. I may have seemed to express a number of things: I really indicated one. God is designated *One* to suit our comprehension, not to describe His character; His character is capable of division, He Himself is not. The words are different, the paths are many, but one thing is signified; the paths lead to one Person. No divisions of the Substance are expressed in that fourfold enumeration; no dimensions, such as we contemplate in bodily structures; no distinction of Persons, such as we adore in the Trinity; there is no enumeration of 'properties' such as we confess to be inherent in the Persons, though they are no way distinguishable from the Persons. Moreover, in God each of these is what the four are all together; and the four are just what each one is. We cannot attain to the full conception of the simplicity of God; hence it is that while we strive to apprehend the Unity, it presents itself to us as fourfold. This is the result of our seeing darkly as in a mirror, the only way for the present of seeing God at all. But when we shall see

¹ Jer. xvii. 18.

face to face, we shall see Him as He is.¹ When that blessed time shall come, the poor, weak blade of our intellect, however hard it may strike, will not recoil, or be broken to shivers. It will rather concentrate itself, and will conform itself to His unity, or rather to that Unity, so that we shall have one face corresponding to His one face. For 'we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is'. Blessed Vision! well might he sigh for it who said, 'My face hath sought thee: thy face, O Lord, will I seek.'² And as our business is still to seek Him, let us for the present, inasmuch as we are weak and faint, and sorely need such a conveyance, let us mount this four-horse chariot,³ if haply we may thus lay hold of that for which we have been laid hold of, that is to say, the plan and working of the vehicle itself. For this admonition have we from the charioteer himself, who was the first to show us the chariot—that we strive to 'comprehend with all saints what is the length, and breadth, and height, and depth'.⁴ 'Comprehend', he says, not 'know': so that, not content with the curiosity of knowledge⁵ we may with all eagerness look for the fruit. The fruit is not to be found in knowledge, but in comprehension.⁶ Besides, 'to him who knoweth to do good, and doeth it not,'⁷ as a certain one tells us, 'it is sin'; Paul also elsewhere says, 'So run that ye may

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 John iii. 2.

² Ps. xxvii. 8.

³ That is, 'the length, breadth, depth, and height.'

⁴ Eph. iii. 18.

⁵ 'Some persons study to know only to know—that is curiosity.—Burkitt.

⁶ Compare Olshausen—'That comprehensive knowledge of essentials which by implication knows everything, and which St. John describes as the anointing of the Spirit which teaches everything.'

⁷ Jas. iv. 17.

comprehend.’¹ I will point out lower down the meaning of comprehending.

28. What then is God? He is *length*, I say; and what is length? It is eternity. This is so long that it has no end either in place or time. He is also *breadth*. And what is breadth? It is love. What bounds shall we set to the love of God, who hateth none of those things which He hath made? In fact, ‘He maketh his sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and sendeth rain upon the just and unjust.’² So then there is room in the Divine bosom for God’s enemies also. And not satisfied with this, God’s love compasses the infinite. It exceeds not only affection, but knowledge as well, for the Apostle goes on to speak of ‘knowing the love of Christ which passeth knowledge’.³ What more shall I say? It is eternal; or, to go a step further, I may perhaps say that it is eternity, You see that the breadth is as great as the length. Would that you saw not only that they are equal, but that they are identical; that they are one and the same thing; no less one than two, no more two than one! God is eternity, God is love; He is length without extension, breadth without distension. In both cases alike He exceeds the narrow limits of space and time, but in virtue of His unfettered nature, not through the vastness of His substance. In such wise He is immeasurable⁴ who hath made all things by measure; and although He be immeasurable, His very immensity must be thus ‘measured’.⁵

29. Once more, what is God? He is *height* and *depth*. In the one He is above all things, in the other

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 24. ‘So run that ye may *fully obtain*.’ Vulg. *comprehendatis*.

² St. Matt. v. 45.

³ Eph. iii. 19.

⁴ *Immensus*.

⁵ In more modern language *conditioned*.

He is below all things. It is clear that in the Godhead there is no halting inequality; the Godhead stands firmly fixed, immovably self-consistent. Consider 'height' as corresponding to the Divine power, 'depth' to the Divine wisdom. There is a correspondence no less between these two than between the former two, if we perceive that this 'height' is unapproachable, this 'depth' unsearchable. Paul marvelled as he cried aloud, 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'¹ We too, as we contemplate both these attributes in God, and their perfect unity with God, may with Paul exclaim, 'O powerful wisdom, reaching from one end of the world to the other with full strength! O wise power, ordering all things sweetly!'² The thing is one, the effect is manifold, the operations are diverse. And that one thing is 'length' because it is eternity; 'breadth' because it is love; 'height' because it is majesty; 'depth' because it is wisdom.

CHAPTER XIV

What it is to 'comprehend' God

30. We know these things. We surely do not suppose that we have therefore comprehended them. It is not argument that comprehends them, but holiness, if at least that can any way be comprehended which is incomprehensible. But unless its comprehension were possible, the Apostle would not have said, 'That we may comprehend with all

¹ Rom. xi. 33.

² Wisd. of Sol. viii. 1.

Saints.’¹ The Saints, therefore, comprehend. Do you ask how? If you are holy you have comprehended, and know; if you are not, be holy and you shall know by your own experience. Holy affection makes a man holy, and that a twofold affection: the holy fear of the Lord, and holy love. When the soul is perfectly possessed by these, it ‘comprehends’ as it were with its two arms, embraces, draws close, holds tight, and says, ‘I have held Him fast, and will not let Him go;’² Fear corresponds to ‘height’ and ‘depth’, love to ‘breadth’ and ‘length’. What is so much to be feared as irresistible power? as wisdom from which there is no hiding? God might have been feared less had He lacked either. But as things are, you must perfectly fear Him who neither wants an all-seeing eye, nor an all-powerful hand. Again, what is so lovable as love itself, whereby you love and are beloved? Yet eternity conjoined with love makes love more lovable; eternal love never fails, and it banishes the suspicion that it ever will. Love, therefore, with perseverance and long-suffering, and the ‘length’ is yours; extend your love even to your enemies, the ‘breadth’ is yours. Fear God with utmost care, and you have laid hold upon the ‘height’ and ‘depth’.

31. If, moreover, you prefer to respond to the four Divine attributes with four affections of your own, you may do so with wonder, fear, zeal, endurance. Most wonderful is the ‘height’ of His Majesty, most worthy to be feared the abyss³ of His judgements. Divine love⁴ demands your zeal, the eternity⁵ of God portrays your constant endurance.

¹ Eph. iii. 18. The Revised Version translates *apprehend*.

² Cant. iii. 4.

³, ⁴, ⁵ These correspond respectively to the ‘depth’, the ‘breadth’, the ‘length’. See above.

Who wonders, but he who contemplates the glory of God? Who fears, but he who searches the depth of His wisdom? Who glows with zeal, but he who meditates on the love of God? Who endures and perseveres in love, but he who aspires to copy eternal love? In truth, perseverance is a sort of likeness here to eternity hereafter. In fact it is perseverance alone on which eternity is bestowed; or rather, it is perseverance which bestows man on eternity; as the Lord says, 'He that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved.'¹

32. And now observe how these four represent four kinds of contemplation. The first and highest form of contemplation is the admiration of the Divine Majesty. If the heart be cleansed, free from vice, and relieved of the burden of its sins, it may hereby be easily raised to things above; the admiring soul may sometimes also for brief intervals be even kept entranced with wonder and amazement. The second must attend the first, for it beholds the judgements of God. It may violently shock the beholder with the fearful vision, but it puts vice to flight, firmly bases virtue, initiates in wisdom, preserves humility. For humility is a good sound foundation of the virtues. If humility, forsooth, be insecure, the whole structure of the virtues is nothing but a ruin. The third kind of contemplation is busy with, or rather leisurely surveys, past benefits; it would not send a man away with ingratitude in his heart, and therefore asks for such an one as is mindful of the love of the benefactor. Concerning such the prophet says to the Lord, 'They shall utter the memory of thy great goodness.'² The fourth kind, forgetting the things that are behind,³ rests in the expectation of the promises alone; inasmuch as it is meditation on

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 13.

² Ps. cxlv. 7.

³ Phil. iii. 13.

eternity, for the things promised are eternal, it fosters a spirit of long-suffering, and gives strength to perseverance. It is now easy, I suppose, to adapt these four to the four in the Apostle's list ; meditation on the promises coincides with the 'length', the remembrance of benefits with the 'breadth', the contemplation of God's Majesty with the 'height', the consideration of His judgements with the 'depth'. He should have been further sought who is not yet found to the satisfying of our souls, nor can be sought enough. But perhaps He is more worthily sought through prayer than through dialectics, and more easily found. With this let us end the book—but not our search for Him.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

ADDITION TO NOTE 2, PAGE 104.

This passage of St. Bernard respecting the two swords was incorporated, almost literally, by Pope Boniface VIII in his famous Bull, *Unam Sanctam*, A.D. 1302. But the Pope advances considerably on the Saint when he says, 'One sword ought to be inferior to the other sword, and the temporal authority to be subject to the spiritual power' (*Oportet autem gladium esse sub gladio, et temporalem spirituali subici potestati*). Bellarmin (*De Romano Pontifice*, Bk. v, c. 5) finds no reference in St. Luke's words to the Pope's having the two swords by the appointment of Christ. He adds: 'The Blessed Bernard and Pope Boniface mystically interpreted the passage; they did not mean to say that the Pope had both swords in the same way, but in different ways, as we shall afterwards explain.'

ADDITION TO NOTE 1, PAGE 107.

St. Bernard's protest was sadly needed. 'A child of five years old was made Archbishop of Rheims. The see of Narbonne was purchased for another at the age of ten. It was almost universal to have bishops under twenty years old.' In the Eastern Church Theophylact, at the age of sixteen, became Patriarch of Constantinople, being installed in his office by legates of Pope John XI (A.D. 933).

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